

THE INFLUENCE OF HUMAN RESOURCES AND THE IMPLEMENTATION OF INCLUSIVE EDUCATION IN PUBLIC SECONDARY SCHOOLS – KENYA

Bibiana Ruguru Ileri (Sr.)

Department of Education, Communication, Administration and Planning

Corresponding Author ruguru8764@yahoo.com

Department of Education, Communication, Administration and Planning

Co-Author: Dr. Madrine King'endo .

Kmadrine@ymail.com

Department of Education, Communication, Administration and Planning

Co-Author: Prof. Simon Thurania:

Simonthuranira@yahoo.com

Department of Education, Communication, Administration and Planning

ABSTRACT

Kenyan constitutions mandate schools to adopt; design and implement programmes that support inclusive education. Despite the inclusive education policy, disability remains a major course of exclusion in public secondary schools in Kenya. The study evaluated the influence of human resources on the implementation of inclusive education in Kenyan schools. The study employed mixed method research design which uses both qualitative and quantitative methods. Purposive sampling technique was used to select 201 respondents from 18 extra-county and county public secondary schools that had enrolled learners with physical disabilities. Quantitative data was collected using questionnaires while qualitative data was collected through interviews and focus group discussions. A t-test was used to test the significance and determine whether to reject or accept the study hypotheses. An analysis of the findings indicated significant relationships between human resources and implementation of inclusive education. The Linear Model showed a moderate positive correlation between human resources and inclusion. The model further showed that human resources accounted for some variation towards the implementation of inclusive education. Creating an inclusive school to respond to learner diversity is a complex process with many inter-related elements. The schools should to have a collaborative approach by creating back-up partnerships with parents, the community and disability associations. Hence, there is a need to mobilize the human resources in order to overcome physical barriers that hinder access and participation for learners with special education needs

Keywords: Practices; Policy; Inclusive; Education; Human; Resources

1.0 INTRODUCTION

Building inclusive schools remains one of the biggest challenges facing education system worldwide (Mitchell, 2015). Inclusion remains a complex and contentious issue as the development of inclusive practices in schools is not well understood (Ainscow, 2005; Anastasiou & Kauffman, 2012; Winzer & Mazurek, 2017). Inclusive education affects not just in principle and the nature of education provided for students with special education needs, but it calls into questioning the broader aims of education, the purpose of schools, the nature of the curriculum, approaches to assessment, and schools' accommodation to diversity. The way in which regular schools respond to students with disability can be a measure of quality education for all students (UNESCO, 2015). Weber and Ruch (2012) argue that a good school is good for all students and work for the achievement of all learners. However, there are practices related to school systems and individuals that work against the development of good inclusive practices. Effective school practices can create an inclusive environment that can give every learner fair access and participation to education. This calls for a need to modify the school practices and the environment to accommodate to learner diversity, (Rickert, 2010; Agarwal & Chakravarti, 2014).

The concept of inclusive education dates back to the 20th century, with many countries striving to adopt and develop education for learners with physically challenges. The movement towards inclusive education for learners with special learning needs began in the 1960s (Forlin, 2005). The United Nations has made influential declarations regarding inclusive education, such as the Convention against Discrimination in Education (1960) that mandated persons with disability to access education without discrimination. The declaration on the Rights of Disabled Persons (1975), guaranteed the respect and dignity of the persons living with disability and the Convention on the Rights of the Child (1989), endorsed the right of every child. Similarly, the World Conference of 1990 (Jomtien Declaration) in Thailand, set goals of Education for All (EFA), which was reaffirmed in the Dakar Framework of 2000 in Senegal. Subsequently, the Salamanca Statement and Framework of Action on Special Needs Education in Spain (UNESCO, 1994), adopted the principle of inclusion and provided a major impetus for inclusive education. The Salamanca Statement is arguably the most significant international document in the field of special education (Budlender, 2015). The major recommendation of Salamanca Statement was that every child with special learning needs has a right to access education in the neighbourhood school. The governments were required to give priority on their policy, legal and budgetary provision to restructure the education system to cater for learner diversity (UNESCO, 2015)

Subsequently, there has been considerable efforts by many nations to work on their educational policies and practices towards the inclusive education, although questions arise on its efficacy and efficiency (Kalyanpur, 2014; Mukhopadhyay, 2015). While several countries' legislations and policies appear to be committed to inclusive education, practices in schools may not meet this rhetoric (Mitchell, 2005). The evidence underpinning inclusive education in African countries is weak and fragmented (Howgego, Miles & Myers, 2014). Inclusive education is marred with inaccessible environments, lack of reasonable accommodation, negative attitudes, discriminatory application and admission procedures, lack of disability policies and choices, disadvantage students with disabilities in Africa (Chataika, Mckenzie, Swart & Cleophas, 2012).

Kenya is among the African countries that has made remarkable advances in the pursuit for inclusive education (Nungu, 2014). The government has embraced and supported the practice of inclusive education by domesticating various international agreements in its laws (Njoka et al., 2012). The policy framework (Republic of Kenya, 2012), recommended that all secondary schools adopt, design and implement programs that implement inclusive education. In spite of inclusive education policy, disability remains a major course of exclusion in schools. According to Doyle & Giangrec (2013), successful implementation of inclusive educational programs requires the involvement and the support from all the stakeholders. The Kenyan Basic Education Act of 2013 mandates that the school Board of Management should be adequately committed as their role is crucial in the implementation of education programs including inclusive education policy. Therefore the study evaluated the influence of human resources towards the implementation of inclusive education in public secondary schools in Kenya

With the implementation of these inclusive education policies, a major responsibility of the Ministry of Education is to achieve universal access to education and training for all learners including those from disadvantaged and vulnerable communities (Ojiambo, 2009). This was reaffirmed by the Basic Education Curriculum Framework Kenya, (2017), that mandates that school practices ought to enable the learner have equal access to education, actualize a variety of opportunities and identify the students' learning needs, talents and potentialities. However, there is scarce literature on the effectiveness of school based practices towards the implementation of inclusive education. Therefore, an evaluation of the influence of human resource would not only prepare a level ground to accommodate learner diversity but also to guide them in their goal to attainment of Kenya Vision 2030 by providing a globally competitive quality education and training to all her citizens thus contributing to the progress of learner achievement (Government of Kenya, 2007)

Policies adopted in education frameworks for promoting inclusive education mandate schools to provide a safe and accessible environment, flexible curriculum, provide adequate and skilled teachers as well as enroll more exceptional students in all the learning institutions (Republic of Kenya, 2004; 2009; 2012). In spite of the policy, disability continues to be one of the primary causes of educational marginalization, creating a large number of students who remain out of school. Action at national and international levels to address exclusion has been delayed by lack of aggregated data needed to assess, monitor and advance the inclusion of students with disabilities in regular schools (Saebones, 2015). Therefore, the study evaluated on the influence of human resources towards the implementation of inclusive education in Kenyan schools

2.0 LITERATURE REVIEW

Transforming school vision into strategies requires additional information and skills, in which teachers and school managers must be trained (Lynch, 2011; Bagree & Myers, 2011). Professional development raises staff confidence for implementing inclusive strategies. Similarly, a change of attitudes can motivate the staff to come up with initiatives that can overcome barriers to implementation of inclusive education. Provision of resources is vital for the success of special needs education services. Resources play a significant role in the provision of special needs education services in schools. Unfortunately, the limitation of resources remains a barrier in many schools in developing countries. It is therefore, advisable to intensify strategies and activities to ensure resource allocation (Villac, 2016). In order to provide such support, the roles and responsibilities of all stakeholders involved ought to be clearly spelt out in contracts or agreements (Lacey, 2000; Frattura and Capper, 2007)

The quality of teachers and their teaching have the greatest impact and influence on educational outcomes. Teachers need certain conditions to implement inclusive education practices and support (Watkins, 2007). In order to provide such support, the roles and responsibilities must be clearly set out in service agreements (Lacey 2000, Frattura and Capper, 2007). Effective, inclusive schools have emphasized the collective participation of teachers; non-disabled learners and other key stakeholder to enable learners with disabilities receive the necessary support. Human resources are significant in transforming schools to become inclusive

Researchers have continuously identified one of the greatest barrier to the inclusion of students with special learning needs in developing countries is a lack of human, material and financial resources (Ainscow & Sandill, 2010; Claiborne et al., 2011). This is because practitioners and policy makers within the education systems lack adequate knowledge to implement inclusive education. Of particular concern is that there is a severe shortage of academic staffs, adequately trained to improve the quality of inclusive education in Africa (UNESCO, 2010). In addition, the status and working conditions of academic staff in many African countries, make it difficult for them to implement inclusion. In this regard, Walton and Lloyd (2012) point out that the effective training of teachers on how to meet diverse learning needs is one of the major challenges facing the implementation of inclusive education in Kenya and other African countries

Social model of disability recognizes that all learners have diverse needs and at the same time have equal rights to access and participate in all spheres in the society including education system. It recognizes that social perceptions, attitudes, institutions and policies all can be modified to respond to learner diversity and access to equal opportunities of disabled people (Ahmad, 2015). Cook and Polgar (2015) argue that the school contextual components that include physical, social, cultural and institutional mechanisms have been designed to cater for the education of able-bodied learners. The buildings, highly structured curriculum, teachers and the environmental background, were structured and prepared to handle non-disabled learners. The school beliefs, rituals and values that give the school its identity were socially constructed. These values and beliefs are highly upheld and easily influence the school activities and perceptions which influence the behaviour of its members towards learners with special education needs (Hendricks, 2016).

The concepts of structures, systems, and practices are dominant in the social theory of disability. These school systems and practices can perfectly facilitate learners with disabilities to participate fully in the learning process. However, when the systems are not modified and restructured to provide an enabling environment, they become disabling practices to learners with disabilities. Among the practices of policy are the human resources, whom, when not trained and prepared to handle special education issues, can pose as real barriers to the implementation of inclusive education. The social model of disability propagates that any barrier that hinders learners from accessing and participating in the learning process is really disabling. Schools are best avenues that can demonstrate implementation of inclusive education. This can be implemented by eliminating all disabling barriers related to human resources, to enable learners with disabilities to thrive and exploit every opportunity. This way, the school provides high quality education to all, view differences as a resource and responds constructively to the special needs of all learners. Similarly, such a school ensures that inclusive education practices are embedded in their vision, mission and initiatives

3.0 METHODOLOGY OF THE RESEARCH

The study employed mixed methods research designs, in order to analyze the practices of policy towards the implementation of inclusive education in schools (Johnson and Onwuegbuzie, 2007; McMillan & Schumacher 2006). Quantitative data enabled the study to apply statistical tests and derive important facts on the practices of policy in order to make an informed conclusion. Qualitative data enabled the study to obtain data from the real experience of what students with disabilities go through during their learning process. The population of the study included 42 county and extra-county schools. Purposive sampling was used to select 18 schools that had enrolled learners with physical disabilities. A sample of 201 respondents, consisting of teachers, non-disabled students and learners with physical challenges were used for the study

Descriptive statistics tables were used to analyze quantitative data by use of frequencies and percentages. Hypothesis testing was carried out via the Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) and t-tests. The data was analyzed using the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) version 20. All the interviews and focus group discussions were transcribed and organized into meaningful categories and the themes that were identified were presented in a narrative form (Frankfort-Nachmias & Nachmias, 2008).

RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

4.0 Introduction

The research findings were organized according to the responses derived from the questionnaires, interviews and focus group discussions. The researcher visited 18 county and extra-county schools and gave out 120 questionnaires to the teachers, of which 100 (83.3%) questionnaires were fully filled and returned.

4.1 Teachers Training on Special Education

The data on teachers' qualification on special needs education is represented on Table 1

Table 1: Teachers' Additional Training and Qualification on Special Needs Education

Special education training	Frequency	Percentage
Short courses	11	11%
In-service Training	5	5%
Diploma	3	3%
Degree	0	0%
Masters	0	0%
Other Qualifications	0	0%
None	81	81%
Total	100	100%

The results in Table 1, shows that the majority of teachers (81%) have not been trained in any special needs education apart from the teacher's professional qualification, while 11% had short courses on special education. A small proportion of 5% and 3% respectively had in-service and diploma certificates. This implies that the greatest number of teachers lack skills in special education needs. To confirm this, Wachira (2012), asserts that factors' influencing the implementation of inclusive education policy in Kenya was largely lack of the skills and knowledge on special education needs.

4.2 The Physically Challenged Learners Enrolled in Schools

The study sought to establish the number of physically challenged students who were admitted in secondary schools. The information was represented in Tables 2 and 3

Table 2: Teachers report on learners with physical challenges currently enrolled in the school

Number of physically challenged	Frequency	Percentage
1-2	70	70
3-5	16	16
None	14	14
Total	100	100

Table 3: Teachers report on learners with physical challenges, previously enrolled in the school

No. of PC enrolled in the past in the schools	Frequency	Percentage
1-5	59	59.0
6-10	5	5.0
10+	4	4.0
None	32	32.0
Total	100	100.0

The results in Table 2 show that 70% of teachers felt that majority of schools had admitted 1 or 2 learners with disabilities. Further, 16% of participants reported that some schools had admitted between 3 and 5 students while 14% of participants showed that all the other schools did not have learners with physical challenges. This report implies that there are very few learners with physical disabilities, who are enrolled currently in public secondary schools in Kenya

Majority (59%) of the teachers in Table 3 revealed that many schools had previously enrolled between 1 and 5 learners with physical disabilities, while, 5% of the sampled teachers indicated that only a few schools had admitted between 6 and 10 such students in the past. Further, 4% of the respondents felt that an insignificant number of schools had admitted more than 10 such students in the past. A significant number of teachers (32%) indicated that several schools had never admitted learners with physical disabilities. This information was crucial because the study could only have been possible when there were schools which had currently or previously admitted learners with disabilities

4.3 Human Resource and the Implementation of Inclusive Education in Schools

Provision of adequate and well trained human resources in special education skills is important in order to remove barriers that hinder the implementation of inclusive education. The study sought to examine the teachers' perceptions on the adequacy and the availability of human resource towards the implementation of inclusive education in schools. The results were summarized in the Table 4

Table 4: The Influence of Human Resource and the Implementation of Inclusive Education in School

	Adequately Done (%)	Moderately Done (%)	Not done at all (%)
Employment of special education staff	0.0	5.0	95.0
Peers support for learners with physical challenges	27.0	54.0	19.0
Learners with disabilities into the student Council	10.0	52.0	38.0
Staff refresher courses on inclusive education	0.0	13.0	87.0

Data presented in Table 4 shows that 95% of sampled teachers felt that employment of teachers with special education skills in secondary schools was not done by the government and only 5% of the respondents indicated that it was moderately done. Further, 54% of the participants revealed that non-disabled students moderately offer positive support to the physically challenged students while 27% of sampled teachers felt that non-disabled learners adequately support them. Only 19%

of teachers felt that they did not offer any support to the learners with disabilities. This study further, wanted to find out whether, learners with disabilities were elected in the student council as prefects. Majority of respondents (52%) indicated that the students were sometimes elected as prefects, while 38% stated that learners with disabilities were not included at all. Only 10% of teachers felt that the learners with disabilities were always elected as prefects. Finally, responses of teachers on staff refresher courses on inclusive education revealed that almost all teachers (87%) felt that such courses were not provided at all. Further, 13% of the respondents indicated that refresher courses were moderately offered at the school level. It is worth nothing that none of the schools adequately offered refresher courses on inclusive education to the teachers

4.4 Regression Diagnostics

Regression diagnostics involved testing linear regression model assumptions: Normality, Linearity, Homoscedasticity and Multicollinearity. For the linear regression model to be valid, there has to be an inherent linear relationship between independent and the dependent variables, the regression-standardized residuals have to be normally distributed, there should be constant variance of the standardized residuals along the corresponding predicted values and the independent variables should not be significantly correlated with each other. Prior to testing the four regression assumptions, the study removed outliers in order to remove extreme biased data. To remove the outliers, Mahalanobis distance, Centered Leverage distance and Cook's Distance statistics were used to look for extreme data. Using 'Select Cases' command in SPSS, the cases which had distance values above the aforementioned cutoff points were not selected for further linear regression analyses

The school practices as independent variables and the implementation of inclusive education as the dependent variables were subjected to the linear regression diagnostics. For normality test, the Shapiro-Wilk's, P-value = 0.027, was less than 5% hence the data was not normally distributed. However, at 1% significance level, the data was normally distributed; the p-value of Shapiro-Wilk was 0.971. According to Ghasemi and Zahedias, (2012), a statistic approaching unity indicates sufficient normality in a data set for carrying out a linear regression assumption. For homoscedasticity, the observed p-values of Breusch-Pagan and Koenker were 0.315 and 0.213 respectively both greater than 5%, hence no heteroscedasticity. For linearity, in ANOVA, the p-value was $0.000 < 0.05$ hence significant linear relationships between dependent and independent variables. Finally, for multicollinearity; the VIF value was $1.317 < 5$ and Tolerance was $0.760 > 0.5$ indicates lack of collinearity amongst the independent variables

Table 5: Model Summary for the Influence of Human Resources and Implementation of Inclusive Education

R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
0.360	0.130	0.093	3.51761

Table 5, shows a moderate positive correlation between the influence of human resources and implementation of inclusive education with a correlation of 36.0 percent. The coefficient of determination (R Square) shows that 13.0 percent variations in the implementation of inclusive education were due to variations in the human resources.

Table 6: ANOVA for the Influence of Human Resources and Implementation of Inclusive Education

Model	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	p-value
Regression	174.949	4	43.737	3.535	0.001
Residual	1175.491	95	12.374		
Total	1350.440	99			

Table 6 shows that the p-value was 0.001, less than 0.05 hence concluding that there was a significant linear relationship between the human resources and the implementation of inclusive education

Table 7: Regression Coefficients for the Influence of Human Resources and Implementation of Inclusive Education

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	P-value	95.0% Confidence Interval for B	
	B	Std. Error	Beta			Lower Bound	Upper Bound
	(Constant)	14.122	1.802				7.839
Human resources	0.365	0.104	0.335	3.518	0.001	0.159	0.570

Table 7 shows the results from regression analysis where human resources were the independent variable while implementation of inclusive education was the dependent variable. The unstandardized beta coefficient shows the increment of implementation of inclusive education with respect to the marginal increment in human resource. The regression equation of the linear regression analysis is:

$$Y = 14.122 + 0.365X_1$$

t – statistic 7.839 3.518
p-value 0.000 0.001

Where; Y – Dependent variable (Implementation of Inclusive Education)

X_1 – School Resources

e – Regression error term

4.5 Discussions

From the study it is evidently clear that the government has not been employing special education teachers in public secondary schools in Kenya. This implies that most teachers in secondary schools lack the skills to handle learners with special education needs. This means that teachers use a lot of time trying to visualize on how to handle issues related to special education needs. In contrast, Meder ((2017), assert that teachers ought to have the time, support, and training to provide a high-quality education based on the student's individual needs. The need for teachers possessing both knowledge and the ability to teach students with special education needs is more critical today than ever before, especially now that such students learn in mainstream schools. In response, Ainscow & Sandill, (2010), suggest that in order to ease the burden, educational leaders would be

advised to encourage inclusive learning processes and to foster capacity building among the staff to enable them respond to learner diversity. Clayton et al., (2010), further suggests that schools ought to have sufficient designated staff members with appropriate skills and experiences to provide specialist support and advice to students with learning needs.

The study findings revealed that non-disabled learners interacted positively with the students living with disabilities to the point of offering needed support. This was supported during focus group discussions, on the theme of working together. One focus group reported that in their school there was peer teaching to uplift the academic performance of weak students. The study results also revealed that there were a few students who found it difficult working with learners with physical disabilities. To affirm this, McCurdy & Cole, (2014) assert that peer support programs in schools create crucial benefits through social and adaptive behavior skills. Consistent with this notion, Riester-Wood, (2015) asserts that peer supports can be a powerful resource for helping learners with disabilities to be academically and socially successful. In affirmation, Asmus et al., (2017) assert that peer support activities and peer networking are valuable interventions that involve identifying and training learners with life skills necessary for future living

The majority of teachers (52%) felt that learners with disabilities were sometimes included in the prefect body. This implies that most schools give such students, equal opportunities to be selected in the student council. This was confirmed by all focus group that students are not segregated from being prefects. The only problem is that they are not strong enough to convince other students to elect them. This type of campaigns puts them off due low self-esteem.

It is apparent from results that teacher refresher courses on basic principles of handling learners with special education needs are not considered as a priority to several schools. According to the Ministry of Education frameworks of 2009, inadequate capacity of teachers to manage learners with special educational needs in regular schools remains an impediment to the implementation of inclusive education in Kenya. Citing research evidence on the significance of teacher training on handling learners with special education needs, Chiner & Cardona, (2013), point out that teacher training in special education needs can influence teachers' attitudes towards inclusion. Consistent with this, Oswald & Swart, (2011), assert that training of teachers become more positive in the inclusion of students with disabilities and in helping them with coping mechanisms. Inclusion represents a significant departure from traditional educational practice on special schools and integrated systems of learning. Pre-service and in-service training becomes a driving force that pushes teachers to develop the educational skills and techniques that can assist students with diverse needs

Conclusion

Allocation of adequate and skilled human resources is essential for the purpose of removing barriers to learning and ensuring full inclusion of students with disabilities. Teachers, non-disabled learners and other stakeholders ought to work collaboratively in order to facilitate the implementation of inclusive education. The role of each stakeholder is very significant in the modifying and restructuring of the schools. Appropriate use of key stakeholders especially teachers, can powerfully facilitate the elimination of challenges that they encounter during the teaching and learning process. Therefore, it is paramount for the government to employ trained teachers who can empower non-disabled learners and other stakeholders to support learners with disabilities

Recommendations

1. Teachers are significant stakeholders in any learning institution. The government and schools should organize training on special education needs, to facilitate their change of attitudes and approaches on how to handle learners with diversity. The study recommends that short-term training; pre-service and in-service teacher education should be a priority. This will make teachers to have confidence as they execute their duties and responsibilities in the implementation of inclusive practices that support all learners
2. The study revealed that only one percent of teachers are employed in secondary schools have special education skills. The government should deploy teachers with special education skills in schools to make it possible to implement inclusive education. It is unfortunate that the employer has neglected this crucial role of providing schools with the right personnel
3. The role of non-disabled students and other key stakeholders in supporting learners with disabilities cannot be underestimated. The schools should train peer tutors and other key stakeholders to enable them meet the needs of all learners with diverse learning needs
4. The schools should to have a collaborative approach by creating back-up partnerships with parents, the community and disability associations. There is a need to mobilize human resources in order to overcome physical barriers that hinder access and participation for learners with physical disabilities in their learning process

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