

Implementation of Inclusive Education in Kenya: Pressures and Opportunities

Ondieki Peterson Osero

Abstract

The term inclusive education refers to a philosophy of education that promotes education of all pupils in mainstream schools. Internationally, inclusive education is seen as a system which caters for the needs of a diverse range of learners and supports diversity, effectively eliminating all forms of discrimination. Kenya has not been left behind in this global move of ensuring that children with special needs are offered educational opportunities and are not discriminated. The purpose of the study was to find out factors influencing implementation of inclusive education in public primary schools in Nyamira County, Kenya. The objectives of the study were: to establish teacher factors influencing the implementation of inclusive education in public primary schools in Nyamira County, to determine school based factors influencing the implementation of inclusive education in public primary schools in Nyamira County, to investigate home based factors influencing the implementation of inclusive education in public primary schools in Nyamira County and to find out teaching and learning strategies influencing implementation of inclusive education in public primary schools in Nyamira County. The study used descriptive survey research design. The study was informed by the Classical Liberal Theory of Horace Mann. The target population was 4000 teachers of public primary school in the County. The study sampled 1040 teachers using stratified random sampling, 145 head teachers and 5 Education Officers using purposive sampling. Hence the total sample size was 1195. The study used Questionnaires to collect data from assistant teachers, interview schedules to obtain data from the head teachers and education officers. Instruments were piloted in the County and split half technique was used to ascertain their reliability. Experts, the supervisors of the researcher, were involved in ascertaining validity of the instruments. Quantitative data from questionnaires was analyzed using descriptive statistics and by help of SPSS version 20 summarized into percentages using frequency units. Qualitative data from interview schedules were analyzed thematically. The findings of the study were presented in tables, figures, pie charts and narratives. The study found that teachers had positive attitude towards inclusive education and were not trained on how to handle learners with special needs. The study also found that learners had a positive attitude towards inclusive education. The study found that parents were performing their basic roles to their children. It was also found that the current curriculum was not meeting all needs of learners in inclusive settings. The study concluded that teachers should be trained to acquire knowledge and skills in special needs education. The study recommended that severe cases of special needs and/or disabilities should be referred to special institutions for more specialized services; review curriculum to suit needs of learners and provision of resources to enhance implementation of inclusive education. The findings of the study might be useful to parents, teachers, educational officers and Ministry of education in making decisions about successful implementation of inclusive education.

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