TEACHERS' WILLINGNESS TO TEACH PUPILS WITH SPECIAL NEEDS IN AN INCLUSIVE SETTING: A CASE OF TEACHERS IN TESO SOUTH SUB-COUNTY, BUSIA COUNTY, KENYA.

Francis Ochiko

School of Education, Department of Education Psychology, MOI University, P.O. Box 3900, Eldoret-Kenya

Abstract: Successful implementation of inclusive education is the key area attracting most educators across the world today. Inclusive education has attracted so much attention from various stakeholders such as the government, teachers, parents and the non-governmental organizations in Kenya. However, not much had been done exhaustively to establish how teachers have been receiving the inevitable change in education regarding promotion of inclusive education settings in public primary schools. Few schools in Kenya have attempted inclusive education and there was little information of evaluation reports on those practicing inclusion as Cassady (2011), suggests that teachers' attitudes toward inclusion need to be evaluated constantly and there was need to participate in regular inclusive education trainings. This study sought to determine the extent to which teachers were willing to teach pupils with special needs in an inclusive education setting. It employed planned behaviour theory by Ajzen which gives a link between attitudes and behaviour. A questionnaire was used to gather information on teachers' attitudes on their willingness to teach in an inclusive education setting. The study used a quantitative research approach. A survey research design was used with selected primary school teachers from Teso south sub-county which had a total of 754 teachers. 75 teachers were selected using simple random sampling. The analysis of coded data was done using Microsoft Excel programme. Descriptive statistics, frequency tables, bar graphs and percentages were used to present the data. The findings of the study revealed that teachers had a negative attitude and were unwilling to teach pupils with special needs in an inclusive education set-up. 89.3% of the respondents strongly argued out that they experienced difficulties when handling pupils with special needs in an inclusive classroom while 65.3% of them maintained that they would not choose to teach pupils with special needs in an inclusive setting. However, 92% of the respondents argued that inclusive education provided for an opportunity for social interaction amongst learners but that had nothing much to do with the teachers' comfort in delivery of their services.

Key words: teachers' willingness, pupils with special needs, inclusive education

I. INTRODUCTION

According to the United Nations International Children's Education Fund (UNICEF), there were close to 200 million children with disabilities in the Worldwide (UNICEF, 2009) and Kenya being a member of international community, has a share of obstacles impeding the smooth implementation of inclusive education with respect to teachers, attitudes on learners with special needs. Although, regular schools did not have the resources to accommodate children with special needs, it is universally agreed that inclusive education provided for relatively equal access to quality education for every child irrespective of his/her status (Mayaba (2008). The situation in Kenyan public primary schools called for investigation on teachers' attitudes on subject of inclusion since it formed part of the wider international community.

Past studies on inclusive education, however, largely focused on basically the success levels the practice had reached in mainly the developed nations in the world, especially in the following continents; in North America and Western Europe (Meijer, Soriano & Watkins, 2007; Norwich, 2008; Van Kraayeonoord, 2007). Little

success was mentioned for developing nations like Kenya. Pearce (2009), suggested that maintaining a positive attitude towards inclusive education was even more important than either knowledge or skills while Boyle, Scriven, Durning and Downes (2011), maintained that a positive attitude towards inclusive education was even more important than school resourcing, because the teacher remained the sole implementer of inclusive education practices. Thus, it calls for regular studies on the status of educators' attitudes towards inclusive education.

In most cases, there was too much drumming of the idea that developed nations had made a major step than other nations in matters of in inclusive Education (Ferguson, 2008). However, developing countries, mostly in Africa, Eastern Europe or Asia confined themselves on nothing but recitation of how inclusive education began and the definitely the challenges and difficulties associated with inclusive education (Charema, 2007; Chitiyo, 2007; Chitiyo and Chitiyo, 2007; Singal, 2008). Areas cited as stumbling blocks to successful implementation of inclusive education revolved round the passive or lack of participation of the education ministries, lack of government support, poor education policies and legislation, lack of sufficient funding, shortage of trained personnel in inclusive education, political instability, and relatively high poverty levels (Ellisworth and Zhang, 2007; Singal, 2008). In this study, teachers' attitudes towards pupils with special needs were not mentioned. Therefore, to fill that gap in research, the questions on teachers' willingness to teach learners with special needs, had to be properly addressed.

In Bangladesh, reasonable legal preconditions for inclusive education had been approved but its implementation was still lagging behind. Although Non-governmental Organizations' were trying to create an impact, inclusive education in Bangladesh had remained under great challenges since inclusion was still regarded as a matter of choice and not a serious national key education agenda (Centre for Services and Information on Disability, 2005). As a matter of fact, even the government documents recognized and accepted that 'provision of education for children with special needs in Bangladesh was still in an early stage of development' (The second Primary Education Programme, 2008). Further, Nordstrom (2008), also pointed out clearly that there was poor coordination among donors in the promotion inclusive education with "only two meetings during 2008" and without inclusive education agenda and "without full government involvement. The last statement vividly showed how negative the whole country was regarding issues on inclusive education. The question arising from such example was that, 'If the government of Bangladesh was less concerned on issues of learners with special needs, what was expected of teachers handling pupils with special needs?

Tanzania lacked a clear national policy for inclusive education though; there was a unit for inclusive education within the ministry of education and vocational training (MoEVT) (Zanzibar MoEVT, 2007) whose core responsibility was implementation of a pilot inclusive education programme in the country's public primary schools. More important was that the Teacher training colleges rarely covered the area of inclusive education and that resulted to insufficient teaching skills and relevant pedagogy required to equip an educator entrusted with the teaching of pupils with special needs in an inclusive education setting (Mmari, Mzee & Frankenberg, 2008; Mboya, Mbise, Tungaraza, Mbaga, Kisanji & Madai, 2008). However, the ministry of education had cooperated with NGO's such as Zanzibar Association for People with Developmental Disabilities (ZAPDD), Mradi wa Kuendeleza Elimu Zanzibar (MKEZA) and World Home for Youth (WHY) to boost the practice of inclusive education in regular schools. A lot of effort had been made to change the general public's negative attitudes towards children with special needs steered by firm religious institutions like the Youth with Disabilities Community Programme in Tanga, Tanzania (Youth with Disabilities Community Programme 2010). With all the struggle to have a strong foundation for inclusive education in the country, Tanzania had yet to mention and focus her attention to the attitudes of teachers towards pupils with special needs at primary level.

Uganda as a member state to international human rights instruments, had fought all kinds of discrimination based on any grounds (Farouk, 2012). However, despite the government's clear position on inclusion, there were reasons regarded as genuine for not admitting children with special needs. Those reasons included violence, which was deemed threatening the safety of other learners; a form of disability requiring too much attention yet it was not available at school; lack of infrastructure that was conducive of a particular need of a learner and when the necessary equipment and assistive devices were not available at school (Farouk, 2012). There was therefore, no chance for full inclusion. That denied pupils to get education within their home district schools if schools around them did not guarantee them admission based on the kind of special need they had no control.

Since the introduction of Free Primary Education (FPE) in 2003, Kenya's ministry of education had undertaken several measures to enable children with special needs access education. Amongst the key milestones of the ministry's efforts was the setting up of a taskforce (Kochang report, 2003), whose objectives was to appraise the status of special needs education in the country. One such good recommendation was the training and in-servicing of teachers for children with special needs- a practice that was on-going in most Kenyan institutions of learning like the Kenya Institute of Special Education (KISE), Moi and Maseno Universities. However, the taskforce had not addressed the issue of teachers' attitudes on inclusive education. The study was therefore, purposed to investigate teachers' attitudes towards full inclusion process in public primary schools of Teso South district, Busia county, Kenya.

Further, according to the basic education Act (2013), a school or person responsible for admission shall not discriminate against any child seeking admission on any grounds including ethnicity, gender, sex, religion, race, colour or social origin, age, disability, language or culture except in cases where a school was registered for a particular gender. That implied that inclusive education was thus, obligatory rather than a choice. It made it imperative to carry out the study on teachers' attitudes towards inclusive education which was no longer a matter of choice but a must in all public primary schools. The sessional paper number 14 of 2012 also asserted that, to provide quality education to learners with special needs, there was a strong need to review and revitalize programmes to promote inclusive education in all institutions. That however, had not been done more so on the area of assessment of teachers views, opinions and feelings about inclusive education.

1.1 Theoretical framework.

The theory of planned behaviour

The study was guided by Ajzen's theory of planned behaviour. The theory stipulates that outcome of a behavior was guided by (behavioural beliefs), beliefs about the normative expectations of others (normative beliefs), and beliefs about the presence of factors that may affect performance of the behavior (control beliefs). Therefore, behavioural beliefs yielded into either favourable or unfavourable attitude, normative beliefs resulted into perceived social pressure or subjective norm and control beliefs gave rise to perceived behavioural control which led to behavioral intention of an individual (Fishbein & Ajzen, I. 2010). The model suggested that attitudes towards behaviour may be influenced by past experiences, previous knowledge and newly acquired knowledge

In the study, the teachers' behavioural beliefs towards pupils with special needs, subjective norm and perceived behavioural control determine the way a classroom teacher behaves while handling learners in an inclusive education setting. The final behaviour of a teacher in therefore, was highly determined by his/her

feelings, opinions, values and beliefs, what others say about him/her and finally how he/she attempted to fight out and balance all the above so as to attain a socially acceptable behaviour. The theory dug deep beyond observable behaviour. Therefore, the theory was employed in the study so as to explore deeper on aspects that propel teachers' behavioural intentions on inclusive education by searching into personal opinions, values and feelings of teachers towards inclusive education practices.

1.2 Significance of the study.

The aim of this study was to investigate the extent to which teachers were willing to teach pupils with special needs in an inclusive education setting. The findings of this study will benefit head teachers in their administrative duties towards promotion of inclusive settings in their place of work. The findings will also help teachers look and evaluate themselves and reflect back what is expected of them in order to effectively embrace inclusive education at their place of work. It will help them (teachers) realize teaching job is a calling which demands for much tolerance for one another so as to fit completely in the society comprising people of different abilities.

The findings of this study are deemed helpful in guiding the government on issues of organizing seminars and workshops aimed at dealing with attitudes towards inclusive education. The government will be expected to use these findings in reviewing existing curriculum so as to find out better ways of managing issues of full inclusion in all public primary schools in the country.

II. METHODOLOGY

The study adopted a quantitative research approach. A survey design was used in the study. According to Martyn (2008), a survey involved describing the behaviour of a subject without influencing it in any way and it provided enough protection against biases and helps maximize reliability (Kothari, 2008). The design was therefore, used to obtain the general opinion, feelings and thoughts of teachers towards inclusive education in their work stations. Simple random sampling was used to select 75 teachers involved as respondents in the study.

Data was analyzed quantitatively. Completed questionnaires from respondents were checked, organized, edited and coded. Quantitative data was analyzed using descriptive statistics. Data was presented in form of tables, charts and percentages. Microsoft office-Excel programme was used to describe the data numerically by use of percentages on charts and bar graphs. The findings are presented, interpreted and discussed in line with the specific objective of the study in the section below.

III. FINDINGS

Data analysis, presentation, interpretation and discussion

The respondents constituted 40 males and 35 females which translated to 53.3% and 46.7% respectively. Despite the majority of respondents were males, the research problem was based on teachers in general irrespective of gender and thus, that could be attributed to sampling error arising by chance and had no effect whatsoever on the outcome of this study.

3.1 Inclusive education affects teacher competence

The respondents' opinions were sought to find out if including pupils with special needs in an inclusive classroom affected their personal competence in teaching. The table below presents the findings.

Table 3.1 Inclusive education affects teacher competence

	Frequency	Percent
Yes	60	80.0
No	15	20.0
Total	**75**	**100.0**

It was seen from the results in the table above that 60 respondents translating to (80.0%) had a feeling that including pupils with special needs in an inclusive classroom affected personal teacher competence in teaching while 15 of them, that is, (20.0%) disagreed with that thought. Therefore, majority of the teachers argued that including pupils with special needs in an inclusive classroom setting affected personal competence in teaching. The findings agree with those of Tiegerman-Farber (2008) which postulates that many regular education teachers who feel unprepared and fearful to work with learners with special needs in regular classes display frustration, anger and negative attitude towards inclusive education because they believe it could lead to lower academic standards. However, 20% who were pro inclusive practices.

Figure 3.1 below reveals that 89.3% of the respondents had difficulties in handling pupils with special needs in an inclusive classroom. It was evidenced from figure 4.3.1 above that 67 respondents translating to (89.3%) had an opinion that they experienced difficulties when handling pupils with special needs in an inclusive classroom while (10.7%) had a view that was contrary to their counterparts. The majority based their arguments on the premise that pupils with special needs were not at same level with other learners and they needed more attention to address their specialized needs which in turn could compromise time that could otherwise be spent attending to other learners without special needs.

Figure 3.1 experienced difficulties when handling pupils with special needs

10.7

Yes
No

89.3

3.2 Choice to teach inclusive setting

Teachers were asked if they would choose to teach pupils with special needs in an inclusive setting. Results were as shown in the table 3.2 below;

Table 3.2 Choice to teach in inclusive setting

	Frequency	Percent
Yes	26	34.7
No	49	65.3
Total	75	100.0

The table 3.2 above clearly reveals that (65.3%) of the respondents disagreed to the notion that they would choose to teach pupils with special needs in an inclusive setting while (34.7%) accepted that they would dare face the challenges associated with teaching pupils with special needs in an inclusive setting. Although results implied that some teachers would choose to teach children with special needs in an inclusive setting, majority of teachers downplayed the same. For those who would not choose to teach them in an inclusive setup, the claim was that some of the pupils needed very special attentions on the side of a teacher so as to enable pupils learn more effectively. Thus, the findings agree with those of KENPRO (2010); severe kinds of special needs like those on wheelchairs highly demanded specialized attention due to insufficient and relevant teaching learning resources like playfields. The much time and attention needed for smooth stay of a learner with special needs was a scarce resource for most respondents.

3.3 Achievement academically in inclusive setting

The figure 3.3 below shows results on whether teachers believed that all pupils could achieve academically if they dealt with individual differences in an inclusive setting.

Figure 3.3 Achievement academically

Results above showed that (37.3%) of the respondents strongly agreed that all pupils could achieve academically if individual differences in an inclusive setting were dealt with (37.3%) agreed to a similar thought, (20.0%) disagreed while (5.3%) were undecided. Therefore, majority were in agreement that if individual differences were dealt with in an inclusive education setting, then positive learning outcome would be achieved.

3.4 Distraction of attention in inclusive classroom

The study went further to find out if pupils with special needs distracted attention of other learners in an inclusive classroom. Results were as shown in the table 3.4 below;

	Frequency	Percent
Strongly Agree	25	33.3
Agree	33	44.0
Undecided	2	2.7
Disagree	11	14.7
Strongly Disagree	4	5.3
Total	**75**	**100.0**

The table 3.4 above indicates that (44.0%) of the respondents were in agreement that pupils with special needs distracted attention of other learners in an inclusive classroom, (33.3%) strongly agreed, (14.7%) disagreed, (5.3%) strongly disagreed while (2.7%) were undecided. Results implied that pupils with special needs distracted attention of other learners in an inclusive classroom. The findings match with those of De Boer, Pijl & Minnaert (2011), which found out that teachers felt incompetent and not confident in teaching pupils with special needs together with those without special needs in one classroom.

3.5 Extra load in an inclusive setting

Table 3.5 below shows findings on whether pupils with special needs were an extra-load to a teacher in an inclusive setting

	Frequency	Percent
Strongly Agree	27	36.0
Agree	33	44.0
Undecided	2	2.7
Disagree	6	8.0
Strongly Disagree	7	9.3
Total	75	100.0

The table 3.5 above shows that (44.0%) of respondents agreed that pupils with special needs were an extra load to a teacher in an inclusive setting, (36.0%) strongly agreed, (9.3%) strongly disagreed, (8.0%) disagreed while (2.7%) were undecided. Thus, majority of the respondents agreed that pupils with special needs were an extra- load to a teacher in an inclusive setting since they demanded a little more attention as compared to their counterparts without special needs. The findings are similar to those of Cassady, (2011) which state that the presence of more than one kind of special need influences teachers' willingness to have the populations in their classrooms

3.6 Provision of an opportunity for social interaction

On finding out if inclusive education provided for an opportunity for social interaction, respondents had results shown in table 3.6 below;

Table 3.6 Provision of an opportunity for social interaction

	Frequency	Percent
Strongly Agree	38	50.7
Agree	31	41.3
Undecided	1	1.3
Disagree	4	5.3
Strongly Disagree	1	1.3
Total	**75**	**100.0**

The above table indicates that (50.7%) of the respondents strongly agreed that inclusive education provided for an opportunity for social interaction, (41.3%) agreed, (5.3%) disagreed, (1.3%) strongly disagreed and (1.3%) were undecided. Majority of the respondents, therefore, strongly agreed that inclusive education provided for an ideal opportunity for social interaction amongst pupils with special needs and their colleagues without special needs and thus, preparing them for life outside school with the community at large.

IV. CONCLUSION

From the findings of the study, it was evident that teachers' willingness to teach pupils with special needs in an inclusive education setting is highly dependent on the nature and degree of special need, teachers' professional background and expected academic outcome from a learner with special needs. Teacher were avoiding the projected blame associated with poor results since Kenya had a history where quality of education was pegged on academic grades as evidenced by the demand of the current curriculum. Teachers had no control over admission criteria and promotions hence, translating to dissatisfaction on matters of planning, correct placement and management of different groups of learners with diverse learning needs.

This study focused majorly in Teso south sub county out of the seven sub counties in Busia County, Kenya. Therefore, the findings can only be generalized to teachers in Teso south sub county. A study of this kind could be of importance if done in a relatively larger area covering the whole of Busia County or a bigger geographical area than Teso south sub county. In addition, respondents in the study may not have provided their correct

opinion in the instrument (questionnaire) used to collect data since much of it had closed ended items which required the respondents to tick and go by the researcher's directive, thus, affecting the study with respect to both validity and reliability.

ACKNOWLEDGMENT

REFERENCES

[1] Basic Education Act. (2013). Government of Kenya. Nairobi: Government printer

[2] Boyle, C., Scriven, B., Durning, S., & Downes, C. (2011). Facilitating the learning of all students: the 'professional positive' of inclusive practice in Australian primary schools. Support for Learning

[3] Cassady, J. M. (2011). Teachers' Attitudes Toward the Inclusion of Students with Autism and Emotional Behavioral Disorder, Electronic Journal for Inclusive Education

[4] Charema, J. (2007). "From special schools to inclusive education: The way forward for developing countries south of the Sahara" The Journal of the International Association of Special Education.

[5] Chitiyo, M. & Chitiyo, G. (2007). "Special Education in Southern Africa: Current challenges and future threats" The Journal of International Association of Special Education.

[6] Chitiyo, M. (2007). "Special education in Zimbabwe: Issues and trends" The Journal of the International Association of Special Education

[7] CSID-Centre for services and Information on Disability. (2005). "Situation analysis and assessment of education for children with disabilities in Bangladesh, South

[8] Asia, East Asia and South Africa". Overseas Development Group, University of East Anglia, disability knowledge and research (KaR) programme.

[9] De Boer, A. A., Pijl, S. J., & Minnaert, A. E. M. G. (2011). Regular primary school teachers attitudes towards inclusive education: A review of the literature. International Journal of Inclusive Education

[10] Ellsworth, N. J. & Zhang, C. (2007). "Progress and challenges in China's special education explorable.com:https://explorable.com/research population.

[11] Farouk, N. (2012). Children with Disabilities in Universal Primary Education in Uganda: A Rights-Based Analysis to Inclusive Education, Masters Thesis, published, The Hague, The Netherlands, International Institute of Social Studies.

[12] Ferguson, D. L. (2008). "International trends in inclusive education: the continuing challenge to teach anyone and everyone" European Journal of Special Needs

[13] Fishbein, M., & Ajzen, I. (2010). Predicting and changing behavior: The reasoned action approach. New York: Psychology Press.

[14] Government of Kenya. (2003). Nairobi: Government printers.KENPRO (2010). Challenges Facing Inclusive Education in Regular Primary Schools in Kenya. KENPRO Online Papers Portal. Available online at www.kenpro.org/papers

[15] Kothari, C. R. (2008). Research Methodology: Methods and techniques. New Delhi: New age international.

[16]   Martyn, S. W. (2008). Descriptive Research Design. Retrieved 18 November, 2012. from Explorable.http://explorable.com/descriptiveresearch-design.html.

[17]   Mayaba, N. N. (2008). The effect of a scientific literacy strategy on Grade 6 and 7 learner's general literacy skills. Published thesis

[18]   Mboya, M., Mbise, A., Tungaraza, F., Mbaga, D., Kisanji, J., Madai, N. (2008). "Situation analysis and needs assessment on special needs and inclusive education in Tanzania." Tanzania ministry of education and vocational training.

[19]   Meijer, C., Soriano, V. & Watkins, A. (2007). "Inclusive education across Europe: Reflections upon 10 years of work from the European Agency for Development in Special Needs Education" Childhood Education.

[20]   Mmari , T., Mzee, O., Frankenberg, A. (2008). "Education for children with disabilities and the use of ICT for inclusive education in Tanzania". Embassy of Sweden, Dar es Salaam. New Delhi: New Age International Limited.

[21]   Nordstrom, B. (2008), Interviews with Britta Nordstrom, Counselor at the Embassy of Sweden, Dhaka, Bangladesh. Telephone interview September 9, 2008. Interview in her office in Dhaka, November 19, 2008.

[22]   Norwich B, (2008). The connotation of special education labels for professionals in the Field, British Journal on Special Education

[23]   Norwich, B. (2008). "Dilemma of difference, inclusion and disability: International Perspectives on placement" European Journal of Special Needs Education.

[24]   Pearce, M. (2009). The inclusive secondary school teacher in Australia. International Journal of Whole SchoolingRoberts, M., & Mathew, N. (Eds.) (2008). Evidence-based interventions for students with learning and behavioural challenges. NewYork: Routledge.

[25]   Second Primary Education Development Programme (PEDP II). (2008). Situational   Analysis, Strategies and Action Plan for Mainstreaming Special needs Children's Education" Bangladesh government.

[26]   Singal, N. (2008). "Working towards inclusion: Reflections from the classroom" Teaching and Teacher Education, vol. 24.

[27]   Tiegerman-Farber, E., & Radziewicz, C. (2008). Language interventions in infants and toddlers. In E. Tiegerman-Farber & C. Radziewicz (Eds.), Language disorders in children: Real families, real issues and real interventions. Upper Saddle River, NJ: Prentice Hall.

[28]   UNICEF. (2009). "Child   info.   Monitoring   the   rights   of   children   and   women". http://www.childinfo.org/disability resources.html. Retrieved May 15, 2010.

[29]   Van Kraayenoord, C. E. (2007). "School and classroom practices in in inclusive education in Australia" Childhood Education, vol. 83, no. 5

[30]   Youth   with   Disabilities   Community   Programme.   (2010).   Youth   with   Disabilities CommunityProgrammeOrganization".http://www.ydcp.org/index.php?option=comcontent&view=article&id=160&Itemid=267), Retrieved March 8, 2010.

[31]   Zanzibar Ministry of Education and Vocational Training-MoEVT. (2007). "Zanzibar Education Development Programme (ZEDP) 2008/09-2015/16