

TEACHERS' PERCEPTION OF THE IMPLEMENTATION OF
INCLUSIVE EDUCATION IN PUBLIC PRIMARY SCHOOLS:
A CASE OF MWEIGA DIVISION, NYERI COUNTY, KENYA

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ABSTRACT

The fundamental principle of the inclusive school is that all children should learn together, wherever possible, regardless of any difficulties or differences they may have (UNESCO, 2007). Inclusive schools must recognize and respond to the diverse needs of their students, accommodating both different styles and rates of learning and ensuring quality education to all through appropriate curricula, organizational arrangements, teaching strategies, resource use and partnerships with their communities. Bearing this in mind the inclusive education policy in Mweiga division was bound to face challenges as teachers implement it at school level as they gear towards achieving the government's aim of having an effective and efficient education system. The purpose of this study was to investigate the teachers' perception and preparedness to implement inclusive education in Kenyan public primary schools with specific reference to Mweiga Division, Nyeri County. This study was based on systems theory. The study adopted ex post facto research design. The study targeted teachers in the 35 public primary schools in Mweiga division. The main respondent in each school was the headteacher, deputy headteacher and four other teachers. The study selected 30% of the target population because the sample size depended on what the researcher wanted to know. In total the sample size comprised of 66 respondents who were selected using simple random sampling method. The main research instrument that was used in this study was questionnaires. A Pilot study was conducted to enable the researcher to assess the validity and reliability of the questionnaires. The questionnaires were given to the research assistants who went to the target population collecting data. The data was cleaned and later analyzed descriptively using SPSS (Statistical Package for Social Scientist) Computer package. The study revealed that teachers had a positive attitude towards inclusive education policy. The study findings indicated that majority of teachers who responded to the questionnaire had no formal training in handling pupils with special needs. The study further revealed that majority of those teachers with formal training had attained a certificate or a diploma with a minority having attained university's first degree and post graduate qualification. Analysis of the findings further indicated that generally teachers were not well prepared to handle pupils with special needs in primary schools. The study findings also indicated that resources for the implementation of inclusive education policy were available in most schools although it was found to be significantly inadequate hence posing a great challenge. The study also indicated that the headteachers support was unsatisfactory and was considerably low. The study recommends that the headteachers need to offer full support to inclusive education in the main stream schools. The study further recommends that adequate resources such as clean toilets, adequate appropriate textbooks as well as desks should be provided in public primary schools. The study also recommends that teachers need to adopt effective teaching methods which may include improvising teaching aids required by learners with special needs. Teachers need to be sensitized on positive perception towards these learners as they spend most of their time in school. Further research is also recommended so as to fill the gaps identified by the researcher in the area of inclusive education in Kenya.