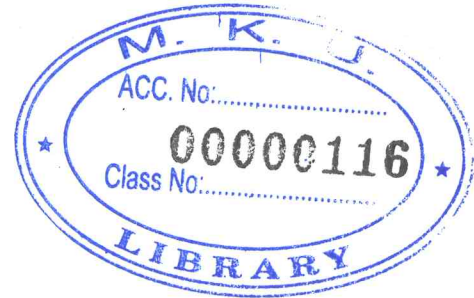


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**TEACHERS' PERCEPTIONS TOWARDS INCLUSIVE EDUCATION OF
INTELLECTUALLY CHALLENGED LEARNERS IN PUBLIC PRIMARY SCHOOLS. A
CASE OF ELDORET EAST DISTRICT – KENYA**



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ABSTRACT

Education is a tremendously important lever for ensuring competitiveness and prosperity in the age of globalization. Around the globe, governments are eagerly comparing their educational outcomes to the best in the world with the aim of identifying and learning from the top performers, rapid improvers and learners with challenges. This is popularly known as inclusive education. It involves having people work together for a common goal. In Kenya schools have been encouraged to the pressure of inclusion to embrace integration to all learners including those with intellectual challenges. The problem is that, despite the adoption of this policy in the Western region, performance remains dismal, with most schools hardly realizing the basic objective of inclusion. The objectives of this study were therefore, to establish the influence of gender on teacher's perception towards inclusive education of intellectually challenged learners, determine the influence of special needs education training on teacher's perception towards inclusive education of intellectually challenged learners, and finally, it established the teacher related challenges with regard to inclusive education of intellectually challenged learners. This study was anchored Fishbein and Ajzen, 1995 theory of reasoned Action and guided by a conceptual framework between and among the variable of study as conceptualized by the author. The study adopted descriptive survey design, questionnaires and interviews guide were used in the process of data collection. A sample of 85 respondents were selected using simple random sampling technique from teachers of integrated public primary schools (IPPS) with intellectually challenged learners in Eldoret East District, Kaptagat Division Kenya who participated in the study. The data was analyzed using both descriptive and one way (ANOVA). The study findings were significant to the school administrations and education policy makers in that it would enable them to refocus on removing barriers to inclusive education and develop more ideal progression towards inclusion, including Massive social mobilization, community education and perception change programmes to encourage acceptance of persons with challenges into mainstream society and schools, and build structural systems to facilitate inclusion. It is recommended that: there is need for more recruitment of female trained teachers in special needs education since they are more receptive to inclusion, the government of Kenya through its relevant departments must urgently take up extensive training in inclusive education to induct the teachers in the general philosophy of mechanics of inclusion, and finally there is need to restructure and enrich the school and classroom environment to be as "least restrictive" as possible to effectuate the philosophy of inclusion.

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