

**ENHANCING INCLUSIVE EDUCATION TO ADDRESS
ENROLMENT CHALLENGES OF LEARNERS WITH SPECIAL
NEEDS IN PUBLIC PRIMARY SCHOOLS IN RUIRU DISTRICT,
KIAMBU COUNTY, KENYA**

**TERESA NYAWIRA WAMUGUNDA
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ABSTRACT

Recent years have seen the recognition of Special Needs Education (SNE) and disabilities not as deterrents to individual achievement but as another way of life. The special needs and disabilities are not emphasized, the capability, the strengths of the individual becomes the point of reference. The children and adults with special needs and disabilities are recognized and enshrined in the New Constitution of Kenya Article 51(ii)(b). The Ministry of Education (MOE) intends to integrate as many of the children with SNE into the education system as possible through Inclusive Education. The major concern of this research was to identify the challenges facing children with special needs in regular primary schools in Ruiru District of Kiambu County. The government's efforts to make regular schools to wholly embrace inclusive education should have largely borne fruit considering the creation of awareness that has been fronted. Identifying the challenges, in the background that learners with diverse special needs are in the regular schools, the research intended to pin point all including some outsider invisible hindrances in the schools. The Literature Review supported the researcher's theory, that there existed a gap in the provision of inclusive Education in regular primary schools. Ability to determine the most prevalent special needs and disability in the schools, helped explore the limitations of diversity in terms of their composition. Enrolling children with SNE from Early childhood classes through the basic education phase would increase accessibility and retention of individual children, the major goal of inclusive education. This is in line with the Education For All (EFA) and Millennium Development Goal (MDG) 2. The MDG target is that Kenya should ensure 9.6 percent of the out of school children (6-13 years) access primary school education. Quantitative research approach and survey research strategy were used to realize the objectives of the research. The target population was selected amongst regular public primary school teachers and the respective parents. Using a questionnaire the researcher established the perceived role of teachers and parents. This has great implication on the implementation of the National Special Education Policy Framework (NSEPF) and other MOE circulars on SNE. Teacher's and parents' prospective changes that would make inclusive education a success in our regular schools were explored in-depth. The schools in the research project were selected using simple random method minimizing bias. The research presented compelling evidence for inclusive educational development and the possible solutions to existing challenges. A co-operative approach by all education stakeholders emerged clearly as most vital element in promoting enrolment of SNE in Inclusive Education. The recommendations and the results are important in the process of SNE policy formulation and its implementation, and forms a basis for further research in this area.