

**AN ASSESSMENT OF THE PRE-SCHOOLS' PREPAREDNESS IN INCLUSIVE
EDUCATION IMPLEMENTATION IN PRE-SCHOOLS IN ONGATA RONKAI ZONE,
KAJIADO NORTH SUB COUNTY, KAJIADO COUNTY, KENYA**

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ABSTRACT

The purpose of this study was to assess the preparedness of pre-schools in implementing inclusive education. Although the government of Kenya supports inclusive education and has a policy on the same, implementation has been a major challenge. Moreover very little attention has been paid on inclusion at pre-school level. Many children with special needs have been left out of classes. This is due to the fact that parents have no idea of what to do with these children. On the other hand, teachers at the pre-school level decline admitting such children as most of them feel inadequate to handle children with challenges. The study is specifically dealt with determining the preparedness of pre-school to implementing inclusive education by determining the strategies being used and the educational facilities in place for catering for learners with special needs in pre-school classes. It targeted all public pre-schools in Ongata Ronkai zone of Kajjido North sub-County. This was a qualitative study. The case study design was used for the study. The researcher used three theories: the inclusive education theory, the Gardener's theory of multiple intelligences and Vygotsky's socio-cultural theory on dysontogenesis. Purposeful sampling procedures were used to determine research sample. Three schools were purposefully sampled out of the nine schools and 45 participants comprising of 3 head teachers, 6 pre-school teachers, 18 pupils and 18 parents were interviewed to obtain data. Observations were carried in and out of the classes to determine the teaching and learning strategies in place, and facilities available for learners with diverse needs. Data was collected using interview schedules, observation and focus group discussion. Piloting of instruments was carried out to determine the practicability of the instruments. One school in the neighboring Isinya district was purposely sampled for piloting. Tranquility was used to ensure credibility of research instruments. In this approach; the researcher used different methods such as individual interview, focus group and observation to collect data. The issue of dependability was addressed by a detailed report of the research process, thereby enabling future researchers to be able to repeat the research process or even obtain the same results. Data was analyzed through thematic analysis. Tables were used to illustrate relationships and themes. The results of this study indicated that majority of schools lack the required infrastructure for inclusive education implementation. Pre-school teachers in Ongata Ronkai Zone used strategies that did not cater for the needs of diverse learners in their classes. From the above, it was concluded that pre-schools were not yet ready for inclusive education implementation. In view of this the study, it was recommended that structures which support inclusive education and monitoring of the policy for its implementation be put in place in all pre-schools.