

**KNOWLEDGE OF PRINCIPALS AND THEIR ATTITUDE TOWARDS
THE IMPLEMENTATION OF INCLUSIVE EDUCATION AS DEFINED IN
THE SECTOR POLICY FOR LEARNERS AND TRAINEES WITH
DISABILITIES IN KISUMU COUNTY, KENYA.**

By

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In partial fulfillment of Master of Science Education Leadership

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Inclusive Education

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Graduate School of Education

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Words 18159

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53 Kabanbay Batyr Ave.
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Dear Maureen Ogenga

This letter now confirms that your research project entitled:
Knowledge and attitude of school principals towards the implementation of Inclusive Education as defined in the Sector policy for learners and trainees with disabilities in Kisumu County, Kenya
has been approved by the Graduate School of Education Ethics Committee of Nazarbayev University.

You may proceed with contacting your preferred research site and commencing your participant recruitment strategy.

Yours sincerely
Tsediso Michael Makoelle

 10/13/2021

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Finally, to my better half June, you have been a constant source of love and strength. Your encouragement and support were a bedrock upon which the two years of graduate studies have been built on. Thank you.

DEDICATION

To my husband June

My children Alpha Lerato and Alma Lethabo. Thank you for understanding when I could not provide the attention you deserved.

And to all working and studying mothers, I salute you.

ABSTRACT

School principals' roles are paramount and their presence is vital during creation of school cultures. Their knowledge about inclusive education is therefore necessary to ensure success during the implementation process. This study aims to explore the knowledge of school principals and their attitude towards the implementation process. Described as exploratory research, this study adopted a qualitative approach, where semi-structured interviews were conducted on six secondary school principals about their knowledge of IE, challenges encountered during implementation if any and mitigations for the challenges. The data was thematically analyzed. The sector policy document was also analyzed in connection to its objectives and themes. The findings illustrated that most principals have a positive attitude towards implementation of inclusive education even though most of them lack adequate knowledge and skills to handle learners with special educational needs and implement inclusive education. The challenges experienced contributed to the negative attitude by some principals. Mitigations of most of the challenges were already outlined in form of strategies in the sector policy document. Therefore, what is required is training, constant communication and follow-up from the government through the Ministry of Education.

Keywords: Inclusive education, special educational needs, principals, policy analysis, sector policy.

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CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTORY ORIENTATION

1.1 INTRODUCTION

This thesis reports on the study that explored knowledge of principals and their attitude towards the implementation of Inclusive Education as defined in the Sector policy for learners and trainees with disabilities in Kisumu County, Kenya. In this chapter, a summary of history of inclusive education in some countries in Africa at large is discussed, including Kenya from the colonial period. The journey of Inclusive education since the Salamanca statement is briefly reflected upon. Barriers and challenges experienced during implementation of IE both internationally and nationally is also briefly looked at. This chapter also defines the statement of the problem and the purpose of the study. The research questions and objectives of the study are also stated and finally the definition of terms.

1.2 BACKGROUND

In order to increase social justice and respect for diversity, the concept of Education for all was promulgated by the United Nations in 1990. This concept has led to tremendous increase in attention towards Inclusive Education internationally. The Salamanca statement also supports the concept by affirming that all children should receive their education in mainstream schools with provision of necessary support unless on severe cases (UNESCO, 1994). This has pushed the international trend to place all students despite their varying learning abilities in mainstream schools. The exact definition of Inclusive Education has not been really agreed on as the context mostly depends on an individual nation and practice as pointed out by Powes (2002) that there is complexity and variations in understanding of IE. The National Association of Schoolmasters

Union of Women Teachers (NASUWT) (2008) in the UK also acknowledges the complexity, variety and highly contextualized definitions of IE. Moreover, the House of Commons' education and skills committee expressed difficulties in establishing the definition of IE by the UK government (House of Commons, 2006).

Ainscow has however defined Inclusive Education as a political movement that ensures access for all (Ainscow, 2016). It recognizes multiple individual differences and diversity which call for a shift in thinking about school reforms led by inclusive values. IE is also related to social justice and inclusion which addresses domination, oppression and injustice (Curcic, 2009).

African countries have values, cultures and beliefs that are geared towards treating everyone with respect and equity; it is more of communalism. Culture is not taught but caught (Idang, 2015); mainly through observations during social interactions. Africans uphold social values, moral values and religious values that encourages being mindful of the others despite their differences. This has propelled most African countries to therefore practice inclusion involuntarily, hence implementation of IE should not be a big task. Various policies are being put in place to ensure that there is direction on how the whole transition process can be achieved.

In South Africa (SA), IE has been defined as a learning environment that promotes the full personal, academic and professional development of all learners irrespective of race, class, gender, disability, religion, culture, sexual preference, learning style and language (Department of Education 2007). Some studies conducted in SA show a negative attitude of educators towards IE, which is connected to lack of adequate knowledge on matters related to IE. (Hay et al., 2001; Pottars, 2005; Mthethwa, 2008). Curriculum is among the major issues in SA that has been pointed out to cause discrimination hence deter implementation of IE (Naick, 2006).

A study conducted in Tanzania also indicates mixed reactions between teachers on matters inclusive education implementation. 65% of Tanzanian teachers are in agreement that efforts should be made to incorporate learners with special needs in regular classrooms, while another 63% feel that learners with special educational needs should be taken care of in special schools. (Zigler, 2015). This mixed reaction may be an indication that children with special educational needs can be easily accommodated within the society but there is a setback when it comes to incorporating them in mainstream schools with other learners.

Studies conducted in developing and developed countries reveal that success in implementation of effective inclusive practices in schools is dependent on various key factors. This includes positive principal-teacher attitudes towards IE and their knowledge of inclusion. (Scruggs & Mastropieri, 1998; Soodak, Podell & Lehman, 1998; Avramidis, Bayliss, & Burden, 2000; Mushoriwa, 2001; Sharma, 2001; Mangope, 2002; Praisner, 2003; Cornoldi et al., 2006). A report from Ghana indicates that most learners with special educational needs do not benefit much from inclusive education initiative due to presence of rigid school programs as well as insufficient specialized teaching skills, unavailability of regular in-service training sessions for teachers, negative teacher attitudes and lack of support from school principals, who are also classroom teachers. (Kuyini & Desai, 2007)

Kenya also joins this world-wide movement that is geared towards making education accessible to all learners despite their differences through a process of educational reforms, a transition that can be made possible through facilitation by the key stakeholders. Education and training of learners with disabilities commenced in Kenya after the World War 11 in order to rehabilitate individuals who were disabled during the war (Ministry of Education, 2009). This

was mostly conducted by the missionaries who later converted the rehabilitation centers to learning institutions making them act as special schools until 1970s when special units and programs were integrated in normal schools (MoE, 2009). The government through Ministry of Education has supported institutions in which training of learners and trainees with disabilities together with other learners is taking place. The ministry of education has enacted a sector policy for learners and trainees with disabilities in which one of the objectives is to develop a clear policy framework for the provision of inclusive education (IE); meaning that Kenya has not been left behind in the implementation of this change from segregated learning to Inclusive Education. The Ministry of Education is working with partners to support this policy whose aim is to make education accessible to all learners and trainees, so that all children with and without disabilities can attend school. The overarching principle of the entire policy is Inclusive Education whose main aim is to mainstream and provide IE and training at all levels of learning. Inclusive education in the Kenyan context has been defined “as a process of addressing and responding to the diversity of needs of all learners through increased participation on learning cultures and reduction of exclusion in education” (MOEST 2009, 2010). A draft of Special needs Education policy was first created in 2009 (MOEST 2009) which provided guidelines on inclusive education, provision of barrier free environment and addressed the barriers to inclusion in accordance to UNESCO documents (UNESCO 1990, 1994, 2000, 2009). The document calls upon countries to draft national policies on inclusive education that is geared towards their requirements. The policies act as a guide in local education and drive global agenda that is informed by the millennium development goals (UNESCO, 2009) and the sustainable development goals (SDGs). Policies are significant factors that are used to determine practices within school settings (Kavua, 2014) thus an important factor to consider when conducting a

study on the implementation of IE. The process of transitioning to IE involves providing space, allocating adequate resources and training in mainstream schools so that all children can learn alongside each other through a project known as ‘No one out’ project.

The success of effective IE implementation is largely contributed by effective school leadership (Ainscow, 2013). It is therefore crucial to explore what the school principals know and feel about this transition and its implementation process. There have been various studies that link school leadership to success of any organizational performance (Muijis 2011, Robinson, Lloyd & Rowe, 2008). The knowledge and attitude of principals towards implementation of sector policy on learners and trainees with disabilities at high school level has not been researched on though, in Kisumu County, Kenya. Much has been done by various researchers on attitude of teachers and students but not principals. Akinyi L. (2001) conducted a study on Effective Provision of Inclusive Education Public Secondary Schools which concentrated on teachers and students as the participants revealing their positive attitude towards inclusive education, Odongo & Davidson (2009) also confirmed the positive attitude that teachers possess during a study examining the attitudes of Kenyan teachers towards inclusion of children with disabilities. Few studies conducted on school leaders have confirmed that positive feedback is obtained when principals are actively involved during the implementation process of IE. Mthethwa (2008) confirms that principals have a positive attitude towards IE but their knowledge differs in terms of teaching experience. In my opinion, the success in implementing effective inclusive teaching strategies in schools largely depends on school principals because as school leaders, they are centrally placed in influencing resource allocations, staffing and student enrolment. Their knowledge and attitude towards I.E therefore greatly influence the

implementation, hence, the urge to explore on what the principals know towards the implementation of sector policy of learners and trainees with disability.

1.3 STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

Attitudes of Kenyan teachers towards implementation of IE has been researched on and most of the studies indicate a positive attitude shown by the teachers (Odongo, 2016., Adoyo, 2017). They are ready to implement the change and embrace IE but “are particularly concerned about lack of resources that have an important implication for the initial teacher education/training in Kenya” (Odongo p. 19, 2016). Principals are teachers and educators too, therefore have a positive attitude towards implementation of IE too. However, most schools lack policy and legislation documents within their custody (Adoyo, 2017). This may slow down the implementation process and hinder transition to IE. Only one study includes an exploration of school principals’ attitudes towards inclusive education (Odongo, 2016). This study shows that school principals have a positive attitude towards IE but negative at the point of implementation.

If the knowledge and attitude of principals is not explored then the implementation of the sector policy for learners and trainees with disability may not be a success as the principals hold the highest leadership positions in secondary schools; yet increase in school effectiveness has been closely associated with school leadership (Robinson et al., 2008) and school culture for new teaching models and educational initiatives (Ainscow & Sandill, 2010).

1.4 PURPOSE OF THE STUDY

Given the dearth of evidence on principals’ attitudes and knowledge towards inclusive education which is the overarching principle in the sector policy in the Kenyan context, it is

necessary to explore this category of leaders as they hold a central position in the governing of secondary schools. Leadership is also central to changing the model, articulating alternatives and moving closer to a more inclusive society (Ruairc et al., 2013) The purpose of this research study therefore, is to critically explore in-depth, the knowledge and attitude of high school principals towards the implementation of Inclusive Education as defined in the sector policy for learners and trainees with disabilities in Kisumu County, Kenya. In order to ascertain the nature of principal's attitudes towards IE and know the extent to which the principals know about the sector policy for learners and trainees with disabilities, then this study must be conducted. The evidence from this study will highlight how principals value, believe and understand inclusive education and will identify the key challenges that are encountered during the implementation of this sector policy. This will inform the policy and strategies for supporting principals in developing inclusive schools. This study provides a snapshot of principal attitudes in Kenya and will focus on a county that constitutes both urban and rural settings. No study relating to inclusive education has been conducted in Kisumu County, making this study a seminal piece of research in this context.

1.5 RESEARCH QUESTIONS AND OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

1.5.1 Research Questions

The overarching research question in this exploratory study is:

What are principals' attitudes towards implementation of IE?

The sub-questions are as follows:

1. How do principals of high schools in Kisumu County understand the notion of IE?

2. What do the principals know about Inclusive Education?
3. What are some of the challenges experienced by principals during implementation of IE and enrolment of learners with SEN?
4. What do the principals believe are the effective measures for mitigating the above-mentioned challenges

Based on the research questions the following objectives of the study are stated:

1.5.2 Objectives of the study

1. To investigate principals understanding of the notion of IE of high schools in Kisumu County.
2. To determine principals' knowledge about Inclusive Education.
3. To identify the challenges (if any) experienced by principals during implementation of IE and enrolment of learners with SEN?
4. To establish the effective measures principals, believe could mitigate the above-mentioned challenges.

1.5.3 Significance of the Study

The main significance of this study was to explore in depth what the principals as secondary school leaders know about the sector policy for learners and trainees with disabilities and in particular the thematic area of inclusive education. The findings highlight some of the contextual opportunities and challenges that the principals face during the implementation process. This study will therefore provide the ministry of education with data and information of

the strategies that are working or those that need review towards IE implementation in high schools. It is also beneficial for the schools that want to implement IE, both learners with or without SEN and the ministry of education especially during provision of infrastructure and allocation of resources and during review of the sector policy for learners and trainees with disabilities. It will finally benefit the policy development around IE.

1.6 DEFINITION OF TERMS

- **Special Educational Needs (SEN):** is a term mostly used when referring to learner having learning difficulty which calls for special educational provision to be made (DfES 2016, p.6).
- **Inclusive Education:** is defined as a political movement that ensures access for all (Ainscow, 2016).
- **School Principals:** Individuals with the ability to demonstrate five essential qualities of leadership; communicating clear visions of desirable futures for their schools, translation of those visions into specific goals, establishing supportive environments for improvement, monitoring progress, and intervening effectively when necessary. (Rutherford, 1985).

1.7 OUTLINE OF THE THESIS

Chapter 1. In this chapter, the statement of the problem is stated and the purpose of the study is discussed. The research questions are also outlined, the terms are defined and the significance of the study clearly presented.

Chapter 2. Gives details on literature review revolving around knowledge of school principals and their attitude towards IE is provided. The theoretical framework is also provided; theory of self-efficacy and transformational leadership theory is discussed.

Chapter 3. This chapter focuses on the research methodology used during the study, research design applied and the justification. It also discusses the tools used during data collection and the roles of the researcher during the study.

Chapter 4. Main research findings arising from the interview data analysis are covered in this chapter. This is in connection to the research questions. The findings are coded to provide main themes obtained from the study.

Chapter 5. This chapter focuses on the discussion that support or oppose the research findings in relation to the relevant literature review. It finally provides a conclusion, limitations and recommendations from the researcher.

CHAPTER 2: LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 INTRODUCTION

This study aims to explore the knowledge and attitude of school principals towards implementation of Inclusive Education as defined in the sector policy for learners and trainees with disabilities in the western region of Kenya. This chapter therefore analyses what other studies have done in the same area.

2.2 POLICIES AS GUIDELINES

Inclusive Education is a worldwide reform strategy whose intention is to include learners having diverse learning abilities in mainstream schools with provision of adequate support. The reform requires an improvement in education systems to become more responsive to the needs of all students (UNRWA, 2013). This involves shift from the medical model that focuses on individual learners' deficits, assuming special services and staff; towards a social model. A social model addresses attitudinal and environmental barriers to learning and participation that acknowledges the students' needs that should be met and shared responsibly.

Kenya also joins this worldwide initiative by enacting a sector policy for learners and trainees with disabilities. Most schools, however, are yet to embrace it fully due to various levels of unpreparedness meaning that segregated education has only decreased on a small scale. Drafting of national policies that are geared towards the implementation of IE is in accordance to the UNESCO documents (UNESCO 2000, 2009), which invite all nations to draft national

policies that act as guidelines in local education that drive global agenda. There is an increase in a range of initiatives, programs and policies in many countries that are geared to support not only student with SEN but also those from ethnic minority groups and lower social classes (Ruairc, Ottesen & Precey, 2013). Such programs include ‘No child left behind’ in the US, ‘every child matters’ in UK and ‘No one out’ project in Kenya. When IE is achieved, an ideal society which is defined as an all-round society that accommodates and supports all persons regardless of their status (Ministry of Education and Technology, 2009) is achieved

Some countries have drafted policies in relation to IE. The policies of IE were previously adopted from first generation nations like UK and USA as a result of advocacy for individuals with disability from parents and groups (Artiles et al., 2011). Most policies are borrowed from these policies. In the United Kingdom, IE is underpinned by various principles which includes every child having a right to quality education, a belief that every child can learn and benefit from education and an affirmation that individual differences between children are a source of richness and diversity (Save the Children, UK). In summary, the policy of IE in the UK ensures that all children are included in the education system. It concentrates not only on children with disabilities but also on children discriminated on grounds of race, color, sex, language, age, class, or caste, religion, political or other opinion (Save the Children UK, p. 3). This gives a wide range of differences in children and trainees considered for inclusion in the UK.

The policy and legislation of Inclusive Education in South Africa (SA) borrow from the UK policy which acknowledges that all learners have the ability to learn as long the relevant support is provided. IE in SA is defined as “a learning environment that promotes the full personal, academic and professional development of all learners irrespective of their race, class, gender, disability, religion, culture, sexual orientation, learning styles and linguistic background”

(Department of Education, 2007). This policy is concerned not only with physical disability of learners in SA but also other diverse variations in learners and trainees. It therefore recognizes that the differences in learners are a source of diversity that should not be used to exclude them (Save the Child, UK). It as well tackles the attitudes that involves changing behavior and teaching methodologies as well as curricula and environment to meet the children's needs. This policy acknowledges the idea that schools should change their environments to accommodate all learners rather than learners changing to meet school conditions. The policy categorically states that individual differences between children should be viewed as a source of richness and diversity. The policy on Screening, Identification, Assessment and Support (SIAS) in SA aims at ensuring that all children of school-going age experiencing barriers to learning, including disabled children are able to access inclusive quality free primary and secondary education on equal basis with other young people in the same community (du Plessis, 2019).

Although the focus of inclusive education is on the students with special education needs, it also is designed to meet the needs of all students (Ferguson, 1996). The sector policy for learners and trainees with disabilities in Kenya, however, is more concerned with learners having physical disabilities being given equal opportunities and sufficient support to learn in mainstream education environment with their peers without disabilities (Sector policy document p. 11). Kenya has signed the UN agenda 2030 as indicated on its SDGs and hence adopted goal 4 which advocates for “inclusive and equitable quality education and promotion of life-long learning for all” (Ministry of Education, Science and Technology (MoEST), 2009). This policy has given little attention to other forms of barriers that prevent learners and children from accessing school, thus altering with results to academic and professional development; yet, one of the main objectives of the sector policy is to develop a clear policy framework for the provision of

Inclusive Education and training. Inclusive Education in the Kenyan context is defined as “a process of addressing and responding to the diversity of needs of all learners through increased participation on learning cultures and reduction of exclusion in education” (MoEST 2009, 2010). Most of the principles that guide the Inclusive education policy review process are more focused on learners with disabilities and exclude other learners experiencing barriers other than those caused by disability. The sector policy has other thematic areas, which include; the assessment and early intervention of learners and trainees with disabilities, easy access to quality and relevant education and training, research, data management and innovation. (Ministry of Education, 2018). Generally, it has been shown that participatory leadership is a requirement in order to mobilize stakeholders toward a common vision about an inclusive education policy (Ainscow & Sandill, 2010).

2.2 ATTITUDES OF SCHOOL PRINCIPALS TOWARDS IE

School principals should be in the forefront during the implementation process of inclusive education policies. Their role is cited as the most vital in creating school cultures which is made possible by building a shared vision; a key factor in implementing IE successfully (Thomas et al., 1998). They represent leadership that is central to changing any model and articulating alternatives. Carter et al. (2009) argues that, for a successful inclusion process, the major factor that must be put in place is the presence of school leaders who are insightful, creative, inspiring and skillful for them to steer the process of change. This description fits a transformational leader. There are certain specific skills and characteristics that should be displayed by a transformational leader. This includes simplification, motivation, determination and innovation

Studies have therefore been conducted by some international researchers on attitudes of school principals towards the implementation of IE and mostly a positive attitude is reported from the school principals. Research conducted in a Finnish school by Saloviita (2020) indicates that a positive attitude was shown by school principals and teachers having special education background training which represents just a small minority while other classroom and subject teachers and principals showed a slightly negative attitude towards IE. They however accepted the idea that learners having special educational needs (SEN) should be incorporated in mainstream schools. This could be an indication that prior knowledge on IE results to teachers having a positive attitude towards implementation of IE. It raises their level of confidence to handle all cadre of learners.

Another research conducted in Anatolian mainstreamed high schools in Turkey on the opinions of high school principals and teachers of guidance and counselling regarding Inclusive education practices indicates a perception by the teachers that the practices are not just a legal requirement but confirmed that it is useful despite the problems encountered especially at the initial implementation stage (Yazicioglu, 2020). The school principals in this particular school however noted that inclusive education may face some challenges due to the various problems faced by the practice that includes insufficient infrastructure, crowded classrooms and improper implementation of individualized education plans (IEPs) as well as lack of team work among the staff and parents (Yazicioglu, 2020). Generally, it is noticeable that secondary school teachers have a less negative attitude towards working with learners having special educational needs than primary school teachers due to the less time they spend with the learners.

A study conducted by Choi (2008) on South Korean elementary school about principals' attitudes suggests that the principals who have undergone training in special education have

more confidence when working with children with disabilities, hence have a positive attitude towards IE. This is may be an indication that knowledge of IE is a factor that determines attitude towards its implementation. Another study conducted by Rakap & Kaczmarek (2010) also confirms what has been indicated by the previous researchers that school principals and teachers who have received training in special education are more knowledgeable and have a higher positive attitude as compared to those who have not received training. This can be attested to higher levels of confidence in working with students having diverse abilities. This shows that for effective implementation of IE principals should be subjected to in-service training on inclusive education. IE may also be introduced as a mandatory course during pre-service training to increase student teachers' level of self-efficacy and for effective teaching of learners with varying needs.

Attitudes of school principals towards inclusion is multidimensional and this makes it necessary that an improvement be made during training in educational leadership programs so that principals are equipped with adequate knowledge, proper understanding and supported by legal framework on IE. Research has confirmed that principals have limited knowledge of IE yet they are expected to lead and manage schools that implement IE (Sirotnik & Kimball, 1994). This is confirmed by Patterson (2000) that only few states are having institutions offering IE training in the US. Makoelle & Somerton (2021) makes an observation on factors affecting IE in Kazakhstan too and makes a conclusion that, "One of the most important factors influencing teachers' attitudes towards inclusion is their need for training" (p.195). The need for training for both teachers and principals are highlighted in most studies as among the key factors that affect the ability of teachers to implement IE. This may be due to the fact that most principals have insufficient knowledge about IE.

Training of teachers has again been confirmed as a way of improving IE through a study conducted in Ethiopia suggesting that most school principals who are engaged on educational seminars at different levels have a positive attitude towards inclusion (Geleta, 2019). During seminars and workshops, sensitization and awareness creation occurs and that increases the level of skills in IE. Such activities make the implementation of IE possible and with fewer hindrances.

Experience of working with persons with disabilities may also affect the attitude of these leaders and also the type of disability that a learner has (Saloviita, 2020). Some principals may be more comfortable with enrolling learners with mild disabilities but may not be comfortable to accommodate some learners, especially those with severe intellectual disabilities or behavioral problems in their schools. This may be attributed to low performance of learners having intellectual challenges in a world where schools compete in academic excellence. International research clearly links leadership to organizational performance. (Mujis, 2011) agrees that a leader's individual decision to implement IE depends on his general attitude which is dictated by that individual. An inclusive culture must also be created by the leaders as that is the foundation of inclusive policy and practice (Shematov & Ekushevskaya, 2018). It is therefore evident that an all-inclusive school should also employ staff with diverse abilities to raise the parents' confidence as they enroll their children to such schools.

A study conducted on the attitude of Tanzanian teachers on the implementation of inclusive education is contrary to most studies above. It involves mixed reactions consisting of some teachers having a positive attitude and another percentage having a negative attitude. 65% of Tanzanian teachers are in agreement that learners with special needs should be incorporated in regular classrooms, while another 63% feel that learners with special educational needs should

be accommodated in special schools (Zigler, 2015). This mixed reaction indicates that children with special educational needs can be easily accommodated within society, but there may be setback when it comes to incorporating them in mainstream schools with other learners. This may be attributed to the fact that teachers do not have enough confidence to handle the students and the school too are not well equipped to accommodate such learners.

Most studies conducted in Kenya focused on the attitude of teachers who showed a general positive attitude towards inclusion with some considering it to be a mutual development in education where both students with and without disability benefit. (Odongo, 2016). In one of the studies conducted in Siaya County, it is observed that most schools do not have policy and legislative documents within their custody (Oracha, 2018), yet policies are significant factors that are considered and used to determine practices within schools (Kavua, 2014). Teachers may lack sufficient knowledge and direction during implementation of IE if the policy documents are not accessible. School principals have a positive attitude towards working with learners with diverse needs but lack sufficient skills and resources to do so. Principals being in-charge of students' enrollment and resource allocation should be highly involved in the implementation process by improving their knowledge in IE.

2.3 BARRIERS TO IMPLEMENTATION OF IE

Research confirms that even though IE has been positively embraced by most teachers and the school principals, the implementation process is being hindered by several barriers despite its increase in awareness (Yasser & Emam, 2017). Some of these barriers has led to poor attitude of classroom and subject teachers at the implementation stage. The negative attitude observed results from presence of insufficient support staff, poor and slow decision-making processes, lack of skills due to insufficient training on how to handle learners with SEN as well

as lack of quality school leadership (UNESCO 2007). This might be one of the indications that teachers are willing to implement IE but the surrounding conditions causes them to develop a negative attitude. In Finland, there are reforms and measures that ensure presence of minimal barriers to IE. Funding of education is controlled by municipal autonomy meaning that there is decentralization in education system which eases the implementation process (Ahtianien et al., 2021). The schools have also been granted powers to organize and implement IE. This is through enlightening and constant awareness creation through capacity building and trust in school principals and teachers (Ahtianien et al., 2012). All these forums enhance faster dissemination of ideas and opportunities concerning IE.

Some institutional barriers to learning and participation also involves the Kenyan government grading schools according to their performances. This may restrict the principals from enrolling students with learning difficulties. Enrolling learners with SEN may be seen as a source of delay in progress of other learners and syllabus coverage (Odongo, 2016). Insufficient teaching materials, poor infrastructure, non-existence of adapted curricula is among some of the other hindrances to successful inclusion. Some of these hindrances and barriers could be eliminated if the attitude and knowledge of IE in principals is researched on and understood.

The communal nature of most African countries is expected to ease the transition process, the same way as they are accommodated in the society, but lack of facilities and insufficient skills results to exclusion of students with disabilities as well as cultural beliefs. Transition from segregated education to IE therefore involves more school restructuring and taking full responsibility of both learners with SEN and those without. It also associated with development of a differentiated curriculum that fits all learners, adjustment of lesson plans to fit the needs of all learners and obtaining of funds for necessary support. The success of IE in

schools depends on the accepting and supportive attitude of all staff and the frequency of interaction with both parents and learners (Yazıcıoğlu, 2021). All this should involve the full participation of school principals and therefore they should have enough knowledge of IE and also have a positive attitude towards the implementation of the sector policy for learners and trainees

There are several theories that can be applied by school leaders and principals to successfully implement the Inclusive education reform. The following theories were found applicable on studying knowledge of the principals and their attitude towards implementation of IE.

2.4 THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

2.4.1 Theory of Self- Efficacy

Self-efficacy refers to perceived capabilities for learning or performing actions at designated levels within specific domains (Bandura, 1997). It is a powerful influence on people's motivation, achievement and self-regulation (Bandura, 1997; Multon et al., 1991). It involves the activities that the school administrators and leaders decide to perform and all the effort that is geared towards the said activity. The level of the principals' self-efficacy affects the students' choice of activities, effort invested, persistence, interest and achievement (Pajare, 1996b; 1997; Schunk, 1995). Students too with high self-efficacy participate more readily, work harder, persist longer, show greater interest in learning and achieve higher levels (Bandura, 1997) as compared with learners who doubt their capabilities. Students learn much through observation of their teachers' behaviors both in and outside classroom. Individuals who feel more efficacious about learning mostly engage in self-regulation activities like goal setting, using effective teaching and

learning strategies, monitoring their comprehension, evaluating their goal progress and creating an effective environment for learning by minimizing distractions. School principals as leaders should be in the forefront in provision of conducive environment for learners and trainees both with and without disabilities and connect both learners as study partners.

There are several ways of creating self-efficacy; Bandura postulated that people acquire information to weigh their level of self-efficacy from interpretations of actual performances and modeled experiences (Bandura, 1997). School principals can therefore weigh their level of self-efficacy by evaluating themselves and also obtaining information and interpretations about their performance in terms of conditions modified to accommodate learners and trainees with disabilities and giving the learners an opportunity to evaluate them too. This can be made possible by principals participating in performance appraisal documents. Principals can as well acquire information about their capabilities by comparing their accomplishments with other principals. This can be done by obtaining information of the strategies implemented by other teachers and school heads to make the sector policy implementation process be a success. Another method in which school principals can create self-efficacy is through observation. Observing others succeed in the implementation of policies that support inclusive education can raise the observers' level of self-efficacy and motivate them to try the task because they have a belief of possibility.

Social persuasions can also have either a negative or positive feedback on the receiver. If school principals are supported by other like-minded stake-holders who believe in their abilities, their level of self-efficacy increases. Individuals can also create and develop self-efficacy beliefs as a result of social persuasions that they receive from others (Bandura, 1997). Positive persuasions most likely to encourage and empower the receiver, but negative persuasions are

fond of weakening and defeating self-efficacy. Finally, the psychological and emotional states of an individual may also affect the level of self-efficacy, for example, presence of stress when about to be involved in an activity may be an indication of weak self-efficacy but when an individual is anxious to perform a challenging task then it may be an indication of strong self-efficacy.

School principals should possess adequate skills and knowledge to produce competent performance because self-efficacy is not only influenced by behavior but also by knowledge. The principles values and beliefs can affect their effectiveness during the transition process from segregated learning to IE (Wigfield, Tonks & Eccles, 2004). Assuming requisite skills and positive values and outcome expectations, self-efficacy is a key determinant of individuals' motivation, learning, self-regulation and achievement (Schunn, 1995). The level of self-efficacy also influences choices that individuals make. People tend to activities in which they feel competent in and confident with, which may make them shy away from new interventions. This are some of the major hindrances to transition and may be one of the reasons why implementation level of sector policy with the overarching principle of IE is unpredictable. Some school administrators with low self-efficacy have a feeling that the whole process will derail the academic standards. "Unless people believe that their actions will produce desired consequences, they have little incentive to engage in those actions". Wentzel K. R & Wigfield A. 2009, p 37.

Self-efficacy can be useful during determination of peoples' efforts in terms of how much they can spend in an activity. Even though several educational situations require that learners work in teams to accomplish a task, self-efficacy relies on one's perceived capabilities; therefore, in school situations, collective self-efficacy is applied which refers to the perceived capabilities of the group or larger social entity (Bandura 1997). It points out on what members believe the

whole group can achieve by working together. In our school environment, several stakeholders come together to ensure success of the institution and achieve a common goal of making learners to succeed in life. For the success of collective self-efficacy in a learning institution, teachers should first possess their own personal beliefs about their capabilities to help students learn, (Woolfolk Hoy & Hoy, 1998). It is known as teacher self-efficacy.

Possession of prior experience in working with learners, trainees and staff with disability raises self-efficacy in the implementation of such policies as opposed to individuals with no previous experience. New learning builds upon prior skills (Wentzel & Wigfield 2009). Bandura (1997) points out that the stronger the self-efficacy, the more likely the persons possessing the virtue are to select challenging tasks, persists at them and perform successfully. In the same breath, it can be pointed out that school administrators with a stronger self-efficacy do not hesitate to be involved in transitions that involve inclusion of learners but and will most likely select challenging tasks of implementing the sector policy for learners and trainees with disabilities thus adapting IE, become persistent and finally perform successfully (Bandura, 1997). Individuals with strong self-efficacy are more effective problem solvers than those with weak self-efficacy as observed by Wentzel & Wigfield (2009).

While attitudes towards inclusion and knowledge of inclusion predicts effective implementation of IE, principals' expectations may not. The school principals must also therefore have the knowledge and develop a positive attitude towards the change and have a higher self-efficacy. In summary, most studies state that teachers are one of the factors affecting the success of educational practices and policies through inclusive cultures. (Aral & Gürsoy, 2007; Batu & Kırcaali-İftar, 2011; Kargın, 2004; MONE 2010; Odluyurt & Batu, 2012).

2.4.2 Transformational Leadership theory

Studies have confirmed that school principals with good leadership skills have the ability to create a quality school cultures, improve both academic and non-academic performance, improve communication between the stakeholders and affect the attitude of the teachers and learners (Chen, 2008; Glantz, 2008 & Hallinger, 2004). Educational leaders and especially high school principals are ultimately responsible for the successful implementation of IE programs as outlined in the sector policy for learners and trainees with disabilities (2018). They are also responsible for establishing a vision, culture and community of inclusion within an organization. Several definitions of leadership tend to reflect on the assumptions that involves social influence process whereby intentional influence is exerted by one person over other people to structure the activities and relationships in an organization (Yukl, 2002:3). Leadership involves a process of influence where a leader must have an ability to influence actions and decisions made by the followers and must be grounded on firm, personal and professional values in order to achieve desirable goals.

Transformational leadership model equates to collegial management model which assumes that the central focus of leadership ought to be the commitment and capacities of organizational members (Leithwood et al., 1999). It is about building a unified common interest between leaders and followers (Gunter 2001, p.69). When both the leader and the follower have a common interest and goal hence a common vision, then implementation of policies become easier. School principals should be in a position to work together with other leaders and teachers in order to implement policies and changes in education sector.

The theory of transformational leadership suggests how leaders' attitudes, strengths and visions affect other members' attitude (Balyer, 2012). Some of the key underlying principles that must be practiced by transformational leaders include;

2.4.2.1 Intellectual Stimulation

This trait is connected to innovation and motivation. It involves a leader continually motivating others to explore creative new ways of learning and instructing (Bass and Riggio, 2008). A transformational leader should be able to understand the likes and dislikes of the people they are leading. This is crucial in the implementation of IE as it involves teachers and learners with diverse differences and therefore the teachers like and dislikes can be understood and appreciated by providing training to increase their knowledge on IE and also providing a pleasant working environment which is less strenuous for both the students and the teachers. This can be made possible when the school principals collaborate with the other stakeholders especially from the ministry of education and other non-governmental organizations.

Teachers also need stimulating work that challenges and expands their thinking, for example when learners with different learning abilities and both with and without special needs are put together in the same learning environment, then the teacher will be determined to improve their intellectuality hence have the desire to keep learning so as to cater for all the students in their classrooms.

2.4.2.2. Idealized Influence

A leader should be respected and trusted within the organization and beyond. This is made possible when a leader has adequate preparation making the leader able to learn more

about themselves (self-reflection) and nurturing as well as supporting their relationship and the immediate environment who are the teachers, students and other stakeholders. Adequate preparation makes the leader to be more knowledgeable and therefore increases their level of confidence and self-efficacy.

2.4.2.3. Inspirational Motivation

Some of the qualities of a transformational leader according to Moman Basham, (2012) are ability to communicate their visions, overcome obstacles and encourage others to do so too. A leader should speak in a clear and practical manner and provide members with a shared motivation by establishing a vision and values that coincide with the organizations mission (Bass and Riggio 2008). This can be achieved by communicating what must be put in place at the moment in connection to the desired end result. This kind of communication eliminates miscommunication and misunderstanding. In an inclusive school, the school principals should clearly communicate the methodologies that should be put in place for effective implementation of sector policy for learners and trainees with disabilities, and most specifically inclusive education theme. These methodologies could include providing a school policy that directs during students' enrolment and placement, teaching methodologies and school rules.

2.5 CONCLUSION

Taken together, these studies as seen from the various analyzed literature points out the various responsibilities of school principals during implementation of IE in high schools and some of the common challenges encountered during the process. Sector policies are important documents during policy implementations and should therefore be availed in learning centers and

follow up made to ensure effective implementation. In summary, the key aspects of inclusive leadership include the following virtues; tolerance, respect, listening, clarifying language, ability to be comfortable with differences and ambiguity, being innovative and daring challenges. In the next chapter, methodologies used to answer the above stated research questions is discussed.

CHAPTER 3: RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1 INTRODUCTION

The intent of this exploratory study was to discover the knowledge and attitude of secondary school principals towards the implementation of Inclusive Education as defined in the sector policy for learners and trainees with disabilities in Kisumu County, Kenya. In this chapter, the research design will be presented and the rationale for settling on the design discussed. I will also discuss the research methodology used, how and why I selected the site and sample for the study as well as the criteria used to select the participants. The chapter continues further to describe the data collection instruments used, how the whole study was conducted and how data was analyzed and finally matters related to confidentiality and research ethics are covered.

3.2 RESEARCH PARADIGM

This study adopted an interpretative research paradigm which involves investing in philosophical and methodological ways of understanding reality as socially constructed (Given, 2008). According to interpretative research paradigm, worldview reality (ontology) is multiple and acquired through individual constructive interpretations that is epistemology. This paradigm helped me understand the phenomenon under study in that principals shared their experiences during implementation of IE in the most natural states that is within their school compounds. The interactions with these teachers who are in the position of a principal gave me a better understanding of implementation of IE at the secondary school level.

3.3 QUALITATIVE RESEARCH DESIGN

There are two major distinct research approaches commonly known in the field of educational research: quantitative and qualitative research designs. While the former develops from the hypothesis or the presumption of a causal relationship between variables, the latter focuses on investigating a problem and gaining a detailed understanding of a central phenomenon (Creswell, 2014).

The overarching research question of this study was, *what are principals' attitudes towards implementation of IE?* To answer this question effectively, a qualitative approach was adopted as the study sought to understand perceptions, knowledge and attitudes as well as experiences of school principals who have been identified as a central phenomenon in this inquiry. Moreover, Creswell et al. (2009) states that “qualitative research is a means for exploring and understanding the meaning individuals or groups ascribe to a social or human problem” (p.4), therefore applying the qualitative approach to this study was justified, as it would provide an in-depth analysis of school principals attitudes towards the sector policy. Campbell et al. (2004) also notes that qualitative research design is always concerned with the authenticity, interpretation of situations, voice of the participant and behavior during data collection. This approach therefore provides the researcher with an opportunity to interact with the participant at a close level.

Qualitative research approach goes further to give the interviewer an opportunity to store data either in note form and or in recorded audio form (White, 2005) which can be replayed severally to get the message required. The qualitative study employed broad exploratory qualitative research because the research aimed to investigate the knowledge of principals and their involvement in the implementation of IE. (Creswell, 2007) Within the qualitative nature of

the study, exploratory research design was applied because the problem under investigation; that is knowledge of school principals and their attitude towards the implementation of IE as defined in the sector policy for learners and trainees with disabilities has not been researched on in the past in Kisumu County. Several studies have however been conducted on teachers' perceptions towards implementation of IE in primary schools and few on high schools. This study also involves few participants and therefore is a short study that will enable the researcher to engage in an in-depth investigation of principals' knowledge of inclusive education. Although exploratory research design has its weaknesses as the results cannot be generalizable and does not tend to offer final conclusion, the selected research design aligns well with a fairly small size of the participants involved in the study. Its purpose aims to explore the experiences of secondary school principals during the implementation of IE in some mainstream schools within Kisumu County.

3.3 GENERIC EXPLORATORY QUALITATIVE RESEARCH DESIGN

Within the qualitative nature of the study, exploratory research design was applied. This is the kind of research design in which the nature of the problem is determined and creates scope for future research (Saunders et al., 2012). It is used when the researcher wants to have a better understanding of an existing problem. To generate data, qualitative interviews were conducted with open-ended questions. (See appendix 1)

3.4 POPULATION AND SAMPLING

Population is a full set of cases from which a sample is obtained for analysis (Saunders et al., 2009). Within the framework of this study, purposeful sampling was used in order to explore and understand the central phenomenon. Purposeful sampling is a type of sampling where the researcher deliberately chooses individuals and sites that are found to be “information-rich” (Creswell, 2014). In the present study, the following criteria was assigned to participants recruited for this study: the research site was secondary schools within Kisumu County and not primary schools because several scholars have conducted studies about teacher attitudes on primary school, for example, a study was conducted in Siaya County primary schools to establish the extent to which teachers had implemented inclusive education practices (Oracha, 2018). Kisumu County is rich in diversity because it comprises of schools situated in both urban and rural settings that gave a variety of experiences by the school principals. This gave me an opportunity to explore the experiences of principals dealing with learners and parents from diverse backgrounds.

Several studies have also been conducted on teacher attitudes (Ireru et al. 2020.; Odongo & Davidson, 2016), but little on secondary school principals thus the reason to pick principals as the key respondents during this study. Principals are school leaders who are among major decision makers on school matters and therefore their knowledge of IE should be sought. They were principals having nearly similar demographic background such as having more than six years in administrative position and having at least one inclusive student. This was achieved by contacting Kisumu County Teachers Service Commissioner to inquire how many schools are present in the County and then placed a request on the principals contact details especially those who have worked in the same position for more than six years. Creswell (2014) describes several

sampling strategies that can be used either before the data collection starts or after data collection has begun. In this sense, criterion sampling form of purposeful sampling was used to select six principals as the number is manageable especially during these fragile moments of the Covid-19 pandemic. Purposeful sampling is sometimes referred to as judgmental sampling because it occurs when the researcher has knowledge of the participants and some of the expected characteristics. Some of this information was obtained from the County teachers' service commissioner's office. The participants were given codes for anonymity such as P1, P2 etc. The table below shows demographic information about the participants.

Table 1 Participants Demographic Information

Code	Gender	Professional Experience	Experience as principal	Sub-county	No. of students with SEN
P1	Male	23 years	13 years	Nyakach	15
P2	Male	17 years	11 years	Nyakach	4
P3	Male	25 years	13 years	Kisumu East	2
P4	Female	30 years	21 years	Kisumu West	15
P5	Male	19 years	6 years	Nyando	2
P6	Female	20 years	8 years	Nyakach	3

The table above describes participants who consisted of two females and four males. They have worked in administrative positions between periods of 6 to 21 years. The number of inclusive students were not accurate because the principals shared that most parents do not give correct information about their children during admission and therefore the above indicated

numbers were of those identified by teachers in the classrooms during teaching process and some few whose information were given by their parents.

3.5 INSTRUMENTS AND MATERIALS

In the context of the present study, the data collection instrument used was semi-structured interviews. The advantage of this data collection method is that it allows the researcher to collect data that is rich in description of experiences and opinions of principals (Bogdan & Biklen, 1997). The one-on-one interview was conducted with the six participants separately, from Kisumu County schools. Even though one-on-one interview method has been recognized as one of the most time-consuming and costly approach (Creswell, 2014), it was still applied in order to gain a deeper understanding of the principal's knowledge and attitude towards implementation of IE. The interview protocol included open-ended questions so as to provide a certain degree of flexibility both for the researcher and the participants (Cohen et al., 2013). Moreover, the interview questions were based on the theoretical frameworks of the study which were derived from analyzing relevant literature from the Kenyan researchers and the international context.

3.6 DATA COLLECTION

Initially, a description of research procedures was provided to the review board of the university (Creswell, 2014). After gaining approval from the Nazarbayev University review board, an attempt was made to receive permission to conduct the research from the County Teachers Service Commission offices. Permission was then received from the Education County Commissioner to access the research site. Within the sites, participants were chosen on a

volunteer basis and details of the study provided to them. Every participant was given an introductory letter, a support letter from the research supervisor and participant consent form. The participants were then provided with interview schedule in advance and a subsequent decision about the time and location of the interview followed. The interviews were held for a maximum of 30 minutes with some lasting 15 minutes in Swahili and English languages supplied by audio recording which has been transcribed and translated into English. Apart from interviews, document analysis was also be used as a tool for data collection where Sector policy for learners and trainees with disabilities documents was be reviewed and legislations governing IE enacted by the principals.

3.7 DATA ANALYSIS

Marshall & Rossman, (2016) describes data analysis as the process of arranging the codes into patterns and making sense from the data collected with the objective of interpreting the data into categories and themes. Given the qualitative nature of this study, the data analysis was carried out through texts, interpretations and meaning. Site memos and the researcher's reflective journal and notes as well as the recorded audios were also used.

The interview transcripts were initially coded by applying the In Vivo coding method to capture and represent the essence of the participant's meaning (Saldana, 2013). Further coding process involved coding for patterns which enabled the researcher notice relevant phenomena and collecting examples of those phenomena; and analyzing those phenomena in order to find commonalities, differences, patterns, and structures (Bisit, 2003). Finally, the collected codes were narrowed down into five to seven categories (themes) in accordance with the purpose of the study and research questions (Creswell, 2014). This process was guided by Saldana's (2013)

coding procedures which involved transcription of the recorded interviews transcribed into thematic memos through thematic analysis and later grouped together to generate interpreted patterns, categories and themes.

A complete report on the findings consisting of conclusions, implications and further recommendations has been provided (Cohen et al., 2013) in the next chapter.

3.8 ETHICAL ISSUES

The research project was conducted following ethical principles and standards according to the Revised Ethical Guidelines for Educational Research (BERA, 2004). The researcher treated participants with an ethic of respect, protected their interests and did not put them at risk. Participation in the study was on the basis of informed consent and on a voluntary basis with a right to withdraw at any time. If the interviewee hesitated to answer any of the questions, the interviewer would proceed with the next question.

Although the excerpts of the participants' responses were to be included in the final report, the interviewees were guaranteed anonymity by being assigned pseudonyms. They were informed that the information provided would be kept confidential and only the researcher and her supervisor would access the data. Participants were informed that their participation will contribute to the effective implementation of inclusive education in Kenya.

3.9 TRUSTWORTHINESS OF THE STUDY

Maintaining trustworthiness during this study was inevitable as data was collected consciously and analyzed carefully. Trustworthiness is equated to a connection between the data

collected and the actual actions in reality. It enables the researcher to relate the existing literature with information gathered from the participants, thus proving trustworthiness of the findings. During this study, trustworthiness was maintained by triangulation. Triangulation involves using several sources of information to establish identifiable patterns (Stahl N., & King J. 2020). Both methodological triangulation and data triangulation were employed in this study where semi-structured interviews and document analysis were incorporated as well as field notes and audio recordings.

3.10 CONCLUSION

This chapter gave a description of qualitative research methodology that was used to study the attitude and knowledge of secondary school principals towards implementation of IE. The sampling method used to select the participants, the research site settled on and the reasons are also discussed. It also discussed how the interviews were conducted and sector policy document analyzed after which the data was analyzed. Possible risks and how they were managed is also briefly analyzed and confidentiality matters of the participants highlighted. In the next chapter, data findings will be discussed and analyzed.

CHAPTER 4: DATA FINDINGS

4.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter aims to present findings obtained from the study conducted qualitatively on knowledge of secondary school principals and their attitude towards the implementation of IE as well as analysis of the sector policy document. Qualitative research design was employed in this study to reveal the perceptions of school principals and their attitude in a realistic and holistic manner in their natural environment (Yildirim & Simsek, 2013). Semi-structured interviews were conducted to the principals at their various stations where observations were also made occasionally on how the principals interacted with the fellow staff members and students. The selected semi-structured interviews gave the participants an opportunity to express themselves freely with few directions from the interview questions. The participants in this study described their understanding of IE and the challenges they encounter during the implementation process. They also gave suggestions on the possible mitigations to the cited challenges. The gathered data were fully transcribed, coded and sorted out into particular categories. This categorization enabled determination of underlying themes that matched the overarching question in this study which is;

What are principals' attitudes towards implementation of IE? It is supported by the following sub-questions:

1. How do principals of high schools in Kisumu County understand the notion of IE?
2. What do the principals know about Inclusive Education?
3. What are some of the challenges experienced by principals during implementation of IE and enrolment of learners with SEN?
4. What do the principals believe are the effective measures for mitigating the above-mentioned challenges?

This chapter is organized into four main sections, the introduction, principals' knowledge about Inclusive Education as defined in the sector policy sector, principals' attitude on IE, challenges encountered during the implementation process and the possible mitigations, the sector policy and conclusion.

4.2 STUDY SAMPLE

Six participants took part in this research. They provided answers to the semi-structured interview questions as shown in the interview protocol (Appendix 1). The questions are open-ended thus allowing the researcher to probe for further clarification where necessary. All participants were secondary school principals within Kisumu County, who had worked in the same position for more than five years. They consisted of two females and four males. All the interviews were conducted on a one-on-one basis within the school compound.

4.3 FINDINGS OF THE STUDY

The collected data was fully transcribed, coded and sorted out into particular themes in accordance to their rate of recurrence. Qualitative data coding as defined by Linneberg et al.,

(2019) is a process of converting rough data into a clear, understandable and trustworthy narrative. The semi-structured interview questions were transcribed through thematic content analysis that involved going through the data and making content out of them. The findings were then organized as per research questions and coded in accordance to the responses as stated below;

4.3.1 Principals Knowledge about Inclusive Education

This section aims to answer the first and second sub-questions which explores how the high school principals in Kisumu County understand the notion of IE and what they know about IE in connection to the sector policy whose overarching theme is IE.

From the findings illustrated in the table 2, it can be noted that most principals have the information and some knowledge about IE though most of them are not trained to handle learners with SEN. This can be confirmed by some of the responses obtained from the interview questions as one of the participants P1 responded:

It is a government policy that wants to ensure that all learners are in school. I think it connects to this project known as No one out.

Most participants confirmed to have knowledge of IE yet they had not received any training on IE or special education. One participant however had received training on IE and had sufficient skills and knowledge on IE.

Another participant P4 viewed IE as means of providing social justice to learners as indicated in the below,

It's where all students attend same schools and learn together sharing the same environment but, same teachers, and same facilities. They just learn together like in they stay in

any other society. But the environment should be made conducive to accommodate learners with special needs.

Some participants also viewed IE as fairness in distribution of learning opportunities in order to benefit from education. It involved providing learners with equal opportunities so that they can achieve their dreams. Secondary school principals perceived IE as a movement that ensures that learners are given equal opportunities as seen in the responses below,

P4. Students attend same schools and learn together sharing the same environment, same teachers, same facilities.

When both students with and without SNE are given equal opportunities to access educational services, then equity and equality is achieved. Another participant (P1) confirms that most principals understand IE in terms of equity by noting that

It is an opportunity for children with SEN to compete favorably with their peers by providing for them resources needed.

A common response across the participants indicates that they have some knowledge about IE but this may have been achieved from the communalism among most African countries that unites them and makes people have empathy for each other. It is supported by ‘Ubuntu’ philosophy which is the belief in a universal bond of sharing that connects all humanity. It encourages equality. P3 confirms what has been noted by other participants;

We admit and take care of them all, we cannot chase them away because they have a right to learn, the challenge is that the teacher is put to task of handling them at their own levels.

Schools have organized themselves to leave no child who has been brought by the parent out but to enroll all learners who have the desire to complete their studies. The teachers being led by the principals have innovated ways to cater for all learners at the school level despite their differences. When parents provide clear information about the students' ability during enrolment the school takes care of them at their level.

4.3.2 Attitude of principals towards Implementation of Inclusive Education

This section analyses the attitude of school principals in connection to the way specific questions were handled during the study and their behavior as interviews were on-going. During recruitment process, most principals were willing to participate in the study. This was already an indication that they have positive attitude towards the implementation process because they had been informed about the topic and were ready to participate.

Most principals confirmed to have knowledge of existence of an educational policy whose overarching theme is Inclusive Education. Some even confirmed that they were pleased with the weight given to IE in the sector policy for learners and trainees with disabilities. This is one of the indications that principals are positive and ready to implement IE. One of the participants P5 commented that,

The theme is very timely and we are happy it has been given the weight it's supposed to have, but how much it is practiced in schools is the concern.

Inclusive education has been positively received by most principals within Kisumu County but implementation process is being hindered by various challenges that are mentioned in the next section. Another participant P1 also agrees that the theme of IE is correctly placed in

the sector policy. Most of these principals seemed ready to embrace IE and implement it effectively.

Theme of Inclusive Education is perfectly placed in the policy and quite in order, but there is negligence on educational assessment, there is lack of awareness creation and follow up on the governments side.

4.3.3 Challenges encountered during implementation of Inclusive Education

In this section, findings on the challenges encountered by the principals as pointed out during the study of knowledge and attitude of school principals towards implementation of IE are discussed. These challenges are later categorized into themes in accordance to the frequency at which the participants mentioned them. The most discussed themes are lack of knowledge and skills, lack of communication and collaboration, limited staff, limited funds and poor infrastructure.

4.3.3.1 Knowledge and Skills

Lack of sufficient skills is mentioned by the six participants as one of the major challenges experienced during implementation of IE. A common response in the data across participants during the study was that they are not feeling supported by the government through the teachers service commission in terms of providing sufficient skills for teachers to implement IE or financial incentives to develop specific learning tools and infrastructures to assist all students learn in a conducive environment.

All the participants mentioned insufficient skills as one of the major challenges affecting the implementation of IE at secondary school level. One of the participants P1 quoted that;

One of the major challenges that we are facing is few skilled personnel, lack of specialists to train teachers and lack of specialized services for the students.

This is an indication that the teachers do not have sufficient skills to handle learners with diverse learning abilities. They are yearning for sufficient skills to handle the learners. It can therefore be mentioned that the teaching fraternity have a positive attitude towards implementation of IE but are not confident enough to impart knowledge into the learners due to lack of skills. Another participant P5 echoed what had been mentioned by the previous participant as quoted below;

Of course there are challenges. Remember as I told you, we are not confident enough to teach students with disabilities, especially mental cases due to lack of skills, no proper training has been conducted even during workshops when sensitization should take place.

Parents and guardians also lack sufficient skills and knowledge on how to take care of the learners with SEN when they are back home as noted by a participant. One of the participants P4 suggested that parents too should have knowledge on how to take care of their children with special needs back at home. Some parents do not know how to communicate with their children having impaired hearing.

P4: Training and creating awareness should also be made available to the parents because when their children go back home during holidays, then they cannot continue with the normal life because they cannot interact properly with parents and peers.

4.3.3.2 Poor Infrastructure

Another common response noted among the participants during the study was that they have poor infrastructure to accommodate learners with diverse educational needs especially the physically disabled. Principals' comments on this challenge experienced during implementation of Inclusive Education was spread almost evenly and contradicting what has been put down on the policy document. Five out of the six interviewed secondary school principals mentioned poor infrastructure as one of the major challenges. Participant P1 claimed:

Insufficient infrastructure for example no ramps for physically disabled learners makes it difficult for us to enroll learners with severe physical disabilities. They will be suffering here.

Another principal identified as P2 reiterated what had been commented on by the other principals on infrastructure as one of the major challenges as;

Physical facilities that are supposed to assist the process are inadequate. The infrastructure we have is only fit for normal students.

These and many other comments from two more principals confirms that infrastructure is a major challenge affecting the implementation of IE in most schools within Kisumu County. The factors mentioned above might had been ignored due to lack of communication among the stakeholders. This brings us the next challenge.

4.3.3.3 Communication and Collaboration

During this study, all the six participants quoted lack of communication among stakeholders as a challenge to the implementation of IE. The principals pointed out that Ministry of education rolled out the policy but did not ensure that the document reaches all schools. They even commented that their efforts were not involved during the policy making. This may be one

of the signs of lack of sufficient communication and collaboration between the principals and the Ministry of Education. One the participants P2 noted that:

The policy makers should be more realistic. They should not make policies in Nairobi, and then it comes down. People should come down and see what is happening and give proper direction and feedback, for that thing to be implemented well. But to be made from there and then they don't follow up, they should try to get feedback. Infact the ministry should be coming down and getting information from the students and teachers the challenges that they are facing.

Lack of sufficient and effective communication is also noted between the parents and the school. During enrolment of students, some parents do not give the right information about their students due to attitudinal or cultural beliefs. This makes the learner not to get adequate help especially those with learning challenges. This was contributed by P1

For example in our institution here, we have those ones with hearing problems and when they come, the parents during joining do not provide us with that information. So they have partial hearing problems, which means that this kind of students are supposed to be sitting in front, but we only discover when maybe is too late. The parents do not avail the information. The students just sit behind so when the teachers are talking they don't get anything from the teachers.

The teaching staff having the positive attitude are able to identify them in class and help as much as possible by changing their immediate environment like changing sitting position to enable them get what is being taught. It is however noticeable that there is both vertical and horizontal communication between most school principals and the staff. This is the reason why they are able to get all this information and be in the fore-front in offering solutions

Some students on the other hand do not avail true information about themselves to the school so that adequate measures are taken during the learning process. The principles noted that most of the disabilities are noticed by teachers when they are teaching and due to their positive attitude, they offer solutions to the learners, thus implementing IE.

P3: These students do not avail the information even in primary, Im telling you, now I have a student with seeing problems, somebody cannot even see properly, but they don't say, we only realize when teaching. The student is straining.

4.3.3.4 Limited Staff

During data collection, the principals raised concern over high pupil teacher ratio (PTR) that affects implementation of IE.

P3: Now we have the 100% transition, all students from primary school are being promoted to high school, but few teachers are being employed, how are the learners with special educational needs going to be taken care of if this population is already overwhelming with only few students having SNE?

There is a general feeling that the learners may not get maximum attention from the current teaching staff given that the population of learners against number of teachers is wide. Learners need individualized attention especially those with learning challenges.

Apart from the teaching staff, adequate non-teaching staff are needed to take care of students during non-class hours. Most schools are unable to get skilled non-teaching staff like defectologists, co-teachers who assist within the classroom during the teaching hours as well as matrons and caretakers who have basic knowledge on how to handle learners having challenges.

4.3.3.5 Lack of Funds

The participants mentioned lack of funds to facilitate IE as among the challenges hindering the implementation process. Most of them therefore have to work with available resources to cater for IE. One of the participants P3 quoted:

Government does not provide money for IE. In fact what they provide in very limited portion is for the students termed as normal. Otherwise for those with learning difficulties and need extra attention is given to special schools. The government policy is talking about things they cannot finance and facilitate therefore may not be easy to implement. In other words, there is no funding dedicated to IE. You know special school receive special funds.

The conducive environment that is supposed to support learners with diverse educational abilities may not be achieved if sufficient funds are not availed to schools.

Similarly, participant P6 also shared:

I am not aware of any special support that the government gives to support IE. I only know of the free primary and secondary education where tuition funds are provided for all students in government schools.

The above-mentioned factors are the major challenges noted by all the six principals during implementation of IE. Some other factors were also observed by some principals within the communities that the learners hail from. This included cultural beliefs and attitudes from the members of society. Several mitigations were suggested by the principals as ways of ensuring that IE is implemented.

4.3.4 Mitigations to challenges

4.3.4.1 Awareness Creation

Most of the participants noted that lack of sufficient skills was a major challenge affecting implementation of IE. This was noticed both in teachers and parents. The participants suggested that the above mentioned challenge could be solved by creating awareness during parents meetings and even community meetings. The society in general should be made to know that despite the challenges that the children may have, they can still attend schools with normal children and gain knowledge. This was pointed out by most participants as quoted below;

P1; It should start from the family level through awareness creation, this is one of the things that the government through the ministry should aim at.

P2;The government should run campaigns to create awareness on disability matters and management.

P6: That's why I was telling you that sensitization is necessary. Parents need to be informed that their children can just be taken care of in this normal schools.

4.3.4.2 Pre-service and In-service training

Having insufficient knowledge among the teaching staff was a major challenge mentioned by all the six participants during data collection. The principles suggested that training of leaders on IE should be included as one of the courses during pre-service training. The principles who are already in service should be provided with in-service training in order to equip them with sufficient knowledge on IE.

P2: What they are supposed to do first, they are supposed to first of all, teachers need to go for workshops, the teachers who will be handling these students, because even those who are teaching in special schools went even for training, they are aware so that they can be able to handle all the students.

The school principals and their staff are yearning to handle all learners, regardless of their differences, but have insufficient skills to confidently do so. They are suggesting that they need to be subjected to training on IE. Another participant P4 confirmed what the previous participants had mentioned.

P4; More elaboration on IE is required and this could be done through the various workshops that are always organized for school principals and teachers when discussing the TSC code of conduct and regulations.

. 4.3.4.3 Provision and follow-up.

It was noticeable during the study that most school do not have access to the policy document that acts as a guideline for the implementation of IE. When further inquiry was made about the absence of such an important document, some principles commented that they have not been supplied with the document and were therefore not aware of its availability. Some principals also suggested that the policy makers should make it a habit of doing a follow up after releasing a document to analyze challenges experienced during implementation of such policies.

P5: Yes, it has been elaborated enough on paper, but to common mwanachi back here, a lot more inform of sensitization should be done. So many teachers are not even aware that such a policy exists.

P6: As long as there is proper follow up on the implementation of IE by the government, then it is going places.

P2: The policy makers should be more realistic. They should not make policies in Nairobi, and then it comes down. People should come down and see what is happening and give proper feedback, for that thing to be implemented well.

4.3.4.4 Proper resource management

Lack of funds for implementing IE was also noted by most principals as a challenge. Most of education sectors had funds allocated but it was not clear on IE. Most principals quoted that this was resulting from mismanagement of funds and lack of follow up. As P1 quotes:

P1: Government provides funds, it is not utilized properly. It is mismanaged before it even reaches schools. The government has also formulated policies guiding service provision for example tax relief on IE teachers, Special Education allowance, longer working years for those interested and many more.

The little amount that the government provides for other sectors in education is also not properly utilized. If the few resources are utilized well and properly managed, then implementation of IE will be on track.

Underemployment of staff has also resulted from lack of sufficient funds, making the pupil teacher ratio to be high. If more skilled teachers are employed, the ratio will reduce and therefore learners will be given individual attention in accordance to their needs.

P5: More teachers should also be employed to bridge the gap that exists between teachers and students.

4.4 CONCLUSION

In this chapter, various opinions and experiences of secondary school principals on implementation of IE were stated. They were then categorized and grouped into themes. All the participants shared their knowledge on IE as defined in the sector policy and challenges experienced during its implementation. They later discussed some of the strategies that could be used to mitigate the challenges. Some of the most desired changes that the participants are looking forward to is provision of skills to handle learners with diverse abilities and improvement of infrastructure and PTR. This will be possible if more funds are allocated to IE. The only gap may be proper follow-up. In the next chapter, analysis of the research findings in relation to literature review will be done, limitations of the study will also be discussed as well as the significance of the study. Finally, suggestions of future research areas given.

CHAPTER 5: DISCUSSION, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION.

5.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter starts by re-stating the purpose of the study and the research questions which were posed to guide the study and the objectives of the study. The summary of the study is provided then, the chapter discusses the findings of the study in relation to the literature. The conclusions are drawn based on the comparison between the findings of this study and other studies in the literature. The recommendations are derived based on the findings of the study and the implications to policy, practice and theory are made.

5.2 RE-STATING THE PURPOSE OF THE STUDY

The purpose of the study was to explore knowledge of principals and their attitude towards the implementation of Inclusive Education as defined in the sector policy for learners and trainees with disabilities in Kisumu County, Kenya.

5.3 RE-STATING THE RESEARCH QUESTIONS AND OBJECTIVES

The overarching research question in this exploratory study was;

What are principals' attitudes towards implementation of IE?

The sub-questions are as follows:

1. How do principals of high schools in Kisumu County understand the notion of IE?
2. What do the principals know about Inclusive Education?
3. a) What are some of the challenges experienced by principals during implementation of IE and enrolment of learners with SEN?

4. What do the principals believe are the effective measures for mitigating the above-mentioned challenges?

The following research objectives were stated at the beginning.

1. To investigate principals understanding of the notion of IE of high schools in Kisumu County.
2. To determine principals' knowledge about Inclusive Education.
3. To identify the challenges (if any) experienced by principals during implementation of IE and enrolment of learners with SEN?
4. To establish the effective measures principals, believe could mitigate the above-mentioned challenges.

5.4 SUMMARY OF THE STUDY

This study has been subdivided into five chapters each as described below;

Chapter 1 is the Introductory orientation. This is the genesis of the thesis and aims to provide the general information about Inclusive Education in Kenya. The purpose of the study is also stated in this chapter and the research questions that direct the researcher and objectives to be achieved at the end of the study. Problem statement is stated and finally the outline of the thesis and chapters are presented to guide the reader through the study.

Chapter 2 Literature Review. The various definitions of IE are given both from the global perspective and in Kenya. The perceptions of school principals and their attitudes towards IE is discussed as researched on by other scholars. The challenges affecting the implementation process both globally and locally are also revisited and possible mitigations to the cited

challenges. Most of the challenges are similar as obtained from various literature. Policies governing IE are analyzed from different countries and in Kenya where the sector policy for learners and trainees with disabilities is looked at.

Chapter 3 Research Methodology. Explicit description of the methods employed during data collection and analysis is given. Strategies adopted are defined such as the research design, research paradigm adopted, instruments used during data collection, the sampling methods and procedures used and the rationale for choosing the specific methodologies also is explained and justified in this chapter. Presentation strategies are also justified and site for data collection is identified and explained. Finally ethical issues to be considered before onset of data collection is aligned and the trustworthiness of the data collected outlined.

Chapter 4 Data Findings. Findings obtained during data collection are analyzed in this chapter. Reports of data analysis is given in form of interpretations of interviews where six participants were taken through semi-structured, open-ended interviews. Answers to each research question is provided. The chapter focuses on what the principals know about sector policy, and in particular the theme of inclusive education. It also focuses on the attitude of the interviewed principals towards implementation of IE. The chapter goes further to analyze the challenges noted by the principals and possible mitigations to the challenges.

Chapter 5 Discussion, Conclusion and Recommendations. This is the final chapter of this thesis. The purpose of the study was re-stated and research objectives with main focus on research questions. Findings are clearly discussed and coded into themes in this chapter in relation to the literature review in chapter 2 Themes obtained are social justice, equity and equality, Skills and knowledge, lack of funds, communication and collaboration, provision and

follow-up. Deduction is made depending on the confirmation or contradiction of the credibility of the study in relation to the previous literature. Recommendations have also been given from the researcher's perspective as well as conclusion of the study and finally areas for further research are discussed.

5.5 DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

The discussion of findings in this study section are organized as follows.

Findings about what the principals know about inclusive education is first discussed in connection to what was reviewed in chapter 2, the two themes that emerge from this section are discussed, and that is social justice and equity and equality. It goes ahead to discuss the attitude of school principals as observed by the researcher in relation to the literature review. This chapter then outlines and discusses the challenges faced by principals within Kisumu County and compares it to the global challenges under the themes of skills and knowledge, communication and collaboration and lack of funds. Finally, the mitigations are discussed

5.5.1 Principals Knowledge about Inclusive Education

The data collected from secondary school principals in connection to their knowledge and attitude towards implementation of IE revealed a lot on their perception about IE. The principals view IE in the following dimensions;

5.5.1.1 Social Justice

Social justice has been given a definition as a political process that is geared towards elimination of hindrances and barriers related to abuse and domination of individuals in the society (Murell, 2006). It is supported as an opportunity to access opportunities in a fair manner

not minding the background of people (Makoelle & Burmistrova, 2020). The principals' responses in connection to their knowledge of IE was more geared towards fair provision of learning opportunities to all learners. Most participants related IE to elimination of barriers and including all learners in the same schools.

When learners are given opportunities to attend school regardless of their ability or social backgrounds but the environment made favorable for all to learn, then social justice is achieved. Curcic, 2009 comments on IE as relating to social justice and inclusion which addresses domination, oppression and injustices. The only challenge is that the teachers are ready to implement, but enough support is not provided that enables the school environment to be made suitable for all learners. The relationship between social justice and inclusion is equity. That brings as to the next point on how school principals view the notion of IE.

5.5.1.2 Equity and Equality

Equity in education refers to fairness in access to opportunities in order to benefit from education. It involves giving children equal opportunities to what they desire to be. 60% of the interviewed secondary school principals perceived IE as a movement that ensures that learners are given equal opportunities to achieve their dreams. One of the participants commented that they admit and take care of all learners regardless of their abilities because they have a right to learn.

The above statement illustrates that the principals are willing and ready to implement inclusive education thus going out of their way to accept and accommodate learners with special education needs despite the gap of having insufficient skills to handle the learners effectively. This has been confirmed by various researchers in the previous studies. (Yasser and Emam,

2017) states that even though most teachers and their leaders have positively embraced IE, the implementation process is being hindered by several barriers despite its increase in awareness. Some of the barriers that lead to exclusion have been noted and they include, insufficient support staff, poor and slow decision-making process, lack of training on handling SEN learners as well as lack of quality school leadership (UNESCO 2007). From the results obtained, poor leadership may only be a factor when it comes to follow up by the policy makers especially from the ministry of education but the principals as the school leaders have exercised transformational leadership strategies to practice IE. The theory of self-efficacy as postulated by Bandura confirms that people acquire information to weigh their level of self-efficacy from interpretations of actual performances and modeled experiences (Bandura 1997). One way that the principals can weigh their level of self-efficacy is by acquiring information and knowledge on how to handle learners with SEN through training. Lack of sufficient training lowers the principals' level of confidence and therefore the process of IE implementation because the learners' needs cannot be met effectively.

5.5.2 Attitude of school principals towards the implementation of Inclusive Education

This section analyses the attitude of school principals in connection to the way specific questions were handled during the study and their behavior as interviews were on-going. During recruitment process, most principals were willing to participate in the study. This was already an indication that they have positive attitude towards the implementation process because they had been informed about the topic and were ready to participate.

Most principals confirmed to have knowledge of existence of an educational policy whose overarching theme is Inclusive Education. Some even confirmed that they were pleased

with the weight given to IE in the sector policy for learners and trainees with disabilities. This is one of the indications that principals are positive and ready to implement IE.

Inclusive education has been positively received by most principals within Kisumu County but implementation process is being hindered by various challenges that are mentioned in the next section. Another participant also agrees that the theme of IE is correctly placed in the sector policy. Most of these principals are ready to embrace IE and implement it effectively. One of them commented that the theme of Inclusive Education is perfectly placed in the policy and quite in order. He goes ahead and cites presence of negligence on educational assessment, lack of awareness creation and follow up on the governments side. Rakap & Kaczmarek (2010) made a confirmation that principals having a special education background have a positive attitude towards implementation of inclusive education. During the study, it was clear that the principles having trained for special education have a positive attitude. One principal commented that his previous training in special education and later inclusive education has given him a better opportunity to interact with learners having SEN. Saloviita (2020) also conducts a study indicating that a positive attitude is shown by school principals and teachers having special education background training.

5.5.3 Challenges encountered during the implementation process.

5.5.3.1 Knowledge and skills

Most principals are not confident to enroll students with SEN and implement IE due to insufficient knowledge in IE). The teachers are yearning to handle all learners, regardless of their differences, but have insufficient skills to confidently do so. They are suggesting that they need

to be subjected to training on IE. Need for training is one of the most important factors that influence teachers' attitudes towards inclusion (Makoelle T. & Somerton M., 2021).

If teachers and school principals lack sufficient skills to attend to learners with diverse differences and especially those with special educational needs, it may lead to exclusion instead of inclusion. Either students with educational needs will not be given the required attention or learners with limited educational needs will be given little attention as most of it will be directed towards the learners with special educational needs. This can be related to theory of self-efficacy which refers to perceived capabilities for learning or performing actions at designated levels within specific domains (Bandura, 1997). A study confirms that principals have a positive attitude towards IE but their knowledge differs in terms of teaching experience (Mthethwa, 2008). It indicates that principals who have an experience of working with learners having SEN are more comfortable with the implementation process. According to the report obtained from UNESCO, lack of skills due to insufficient training on how to handle learners with SEN as well as lack of quality school leadership (UNESCO, 2007) affects the implementation process. It was also noted by the principals that the parents and the learners also lack of knowledge about IE. This may have been caused by poor dissemination of information as noted in the sector policy document being one of the barriers to inclusion (Policy document, 2018). There should be a continuation of what is started in the learning institutions to homes where the learners reside after school. When parents are not provided with sufficient knowledge to handle their children with SNE, then such children feel excluded, or it might lead to miscommunication.

5.5.3.2 Lack of Funds

Public schools have always been allocated funds annually from the national government and households to cater for the areas shown in the figure below.

Fig. 1 Programme allocation for Education Sector in Kshs.

Programme	2018/19
Primary Education	20,396
Secondary Education	68,707
Quality Assurance and Standards (Basic)	4,331
Technical Vocational Education and Training	18,230
Youth Training and Development	2,156
University Education	108,865
Research, Science, Technology and Innovation	2,654
Teacher Resource Management	233,823
Teacher Management Primary	150,844
Teacher Management Secondary	72,170
Teacher Management Tertiary	10,764
Governance and Standards	542
General Administration, Planning and Support Services	12,142
TOTAL FOR THE SECTOR	471, 84

The above figures obtained from the Ministry of Education's basic education statistical booklet 2019 confirms the claim from the principals that the government does not fund IE. The principals therefore have to work with available resources to cater for IE. One of the participants talked about lack of funds dedicated to IE as one of the challenges experienced during the implementation process. Research conducted by Ahtianien et al., (2021) confirms that one of the

reasons why IE has been implemented effectively in Finland is because funding of IE is controlled by municipal autonomy and is provided depending on the number of individuals with SEN and the severity of the disability. This makes institutions to enroll learners with SEN because the structural and conceptual requirements are facilitated.

The results obtained from the Kenya basic educational statistical booklet (2019 indicated in fig.1) confirms what was reported by the principal that there is an imbalance during budget allocation to educating learners and trainees with disabilities. This may be attributed to the following factors; it costs more to educate them; there is lack of accurate estimates on how much it costs to educate them depending on their disabilities and the resources do not allow for optimal capitation funding (sector policy document 2018). Insufficient funds allocated for IE has therefore resulted to poor infrastructure and high PTR.

5.5.3.3 Poor infrastructure

Inclusive Education has been defined by Ainscow as a political movement that ensures access for all (Ainscow, 2016). Students have to be made comfortable and resources made accessible to them in order to effectively transit to inclusive schools hence proper implementation of IE. The environment of learning institutions should also be modified to accommodate learners with diverse learning and physical abilities. Creating favorable learning and environmental conditions for students with SEN to study in mainstream schools is one the solutions for inclusion. The overarching theme in the sector policy which is IE is much concerned with learners having physical disabilities being given an equal opportunity and sufficient support to learn in mainstream education environment with their peers without disabilities (Sector policy document, p.11). Improving the infrastructure requires proper allocation of funds by the government to inclusive schools.

5.5.3.4 Limited Staff

One of the major indicators of quality education is pupil teacher ratio (PTR). The range of PTR dictates the contact time between the learner and the teacher, hence, the quality of education provided. According to the KICD statistical booklet (2019), the PTR ratio for public schools in Kisumu county stands at 29.5 as indicated in figure 2 which is supposed to be lower than the standard ratio of 40:1. Principals however lamented on the high number of student as compared to the number of teachers present that has been contributed by the government's initiative to promote all learners who have sat for their primary national exams to secondary schools(100% transition), but no major increase in the number of teachers.

Lack of sufficient funds experienced by inclusive schools' results to employment of few teachers thus increasing the PTR ratio. Teachers with sufficient skills in IE are also few yet success in implementation of IE is determined by the frequency of interaction between both parents, teachers and learners (Yazıcıoğlu, 2021). The frequency in interaction is dependent on the ratio of teacher to student population.

5.5.3.5 Communication and Collaboration

One of the major characteristics of a transformational leader simplification. This trait describes a leader who speaks in a clear and practical manner with the desired end result stated as a way of direction. This kind of trait eliminates misunderstanding and miscommunication. During this study, all the six participants quoted lack of communication among stakeholders as a challenge to the implementation of IE. The principals pointed out that Ministry of education rolled out the policy but did not ensure that the document reaches all schools. They even

commented that their efforts were not involved during the policy making. This may be one of the signs of lack of sufficient communication and collaboration between the principals and the Ministry of Education. In a study conducted by Mthethwa (2008), it is realized that positive feedback is obtained when principals are actively involved during the implementation process of IE. Feedback can only be obtained from the principals when there is constant communication and follow-up from the policy makers.

Lack of sufficient and effective communication is also noted between the parents and the school. During enrolment of students, some parents do not give the right information about their students due to attitudinal or cultural beliefs. This makes the learner not to get adequate help especially those with learning challenges. It is noted by a study that the frequency of interaction with both parents and learners and the school determines how much policies can be implemented (Yazıcıoğlu, 2021). The teaching staff having the positive attitude are able to identify the learners with SEN in class and help as much as possible by changing their immediate environment like changing sitting position to enable them get what is being taught. It is however noticeable that there is both vertical and horizontal communication between most school principals and the staff. This is the reason why they are able to get all this information and be in the fore-front in offering solutions. Some Secondary school principals are not able to teach most classes due to administrative duties and therefore are not in so much contact with the learners. They can therefore get information about learners only if they practice transformational leadership. The gap in communication is noticeable between the school and the policy providers.

5.5.4 Mitigations to the challenges

5.5.4.1 Training and Awareness Creation

Generally, studies conducted by previous scholars have confirmed that training of school principals is necessary before and during implementation of inclusive education. Choi (2008) confirms the principals who have undergone training in special education have more confidence when working with children with disabilities hence have a positive attitude towards IE. Another study shows that school principals who are engaged on educational seminars at different levels have a positive attitude towards inclusion (Geleta, 2019). The parents' knowledge however is not noted by most researchers as a challenge to implementation of IE.

The training could be presented in terms of pre-service and in-service training to the school principals and creating awareness during parents' meetings and even community meetings. In Finland, in-service training for teachers and principals is locally organized where new ideas and opportunities are communicated thus improvement in the implementation process (Ahtiainen et al., 2021). The society in general should be made to know that despite the challenges that the children may have, they can still be accommodated in mainstream schools with their peers. One of the objectives of the Kenyan government through the ministry of education is to identify learners with special education needs early in their life and provide assessment so that they can access learning institutions early enough. Research has established a policy on screening, identification, assessment and support (SIAS) that aims at ensuring that all children of school going age experiencing barriers to learning should be identified and granted access to inclusive education (du Plessis, 2013). This may only be possible if parents are made aware of signs and symptoms to report when observed earlier in life for assessment.

The continued existence of special schools, has also made the society to believe that learners and trainees with disabilities should only be enrolled in these special institutions and that inclusion is not a possible (Sector policy document, 2018). This notion can be corrected if the society is made aware of existence and benefits of IE. In conclusion, information should be used to empower teaching staff and the society about IE. This information can be disseminated by training the staff and especially the school principals who also pass the information and skills to the other staff members.

5.5.4.2 Provision and follow-up

Lack of funds can be mitigated through provision of sufficient funds to facilitate the implementation of IE and proper resource management. It is also worth noting that resources should not just be about money. They can be found in any aspect of a school in form of other students, parents or guardians, communities, changes in culture, policies and practices (Booth & Ainscow, 2002). Learners can be resourceful to each other through peer-teaching. The government should also enact strategies to enable them follow-up on the released resources. Follow-up is manageable when the responsibilities are decentralized. In Finland, schools have been given authorities and powers to organize and implement IE (Ahtiainen et al., 2021). This eases the follow-up process.

5.5.4.3 Proper resource management

Participants having noted that there might be mismanagement of the little funds that the government provides, suggested that a clear policy should be enacted on how the funds meant for IE can be managed. Other participants suggested that the resources required for the

implementation process could be placed under the custody of school principals as suggested by Ahtiainen et al., (2021) where decentralization in educational system in Finland has enabled the implementation of reforms. Therefore, resources that are required by learners having SEN should be provided and distribution fairly done through the school principals. However, precautions should be taken not to put a lot of trust on the principals only.

5.6 ANALYSIS OF THE SECTOR POLICY DOCUMENT

The Kenyan Government has made a commitment to provide inclusive, relevant and equitable quality education and training opportunities to all its citizens including those with disabilities. This has been made possible through the signing and ratification of various international frameworks and the development of laws and policies geared towards fulfilling the fundamental human right to education. One of these policies is the sector policy for learners and trainees with disabilities whose overarching theme is Inclusive Education. This policy recognizes the need for Kenya to move towards inclusive education, instead of segregated education. Inclusive education therefore becomes an overarching principle, which advocates for the right of all learners with disability to be enrolled in mainstream classroom together with his or her peers without disabilities.

Inclusive Education as defined in the sector policy document is “an approach where learners and trainees with disabilities are provided with appropriate educational interventions within regular institutions of learning with reasonable accommodations and support” (Sector policy document, 2018, p.vii). This definition may be viewed as integration in some contexts as it mainly gives much attention to learners with disabilities excluding those who may not be having disabilities but are originating from minority groups. The definition is supported by the

Kenyan constitution whose scope covers only learners and trainees with disabilities The Constitution of Kenya (Republic of Kenya, 2010a). It is having a guarantee that learners and trainees with any kind of disability can appropriately access education and training and that all learning institutions should accommodate them. The previous Special Needs Education (SNE) policy (2009) catered for a wide variety of learners that included those with and without disabilities, but may have specific educational needs like refugees, orphaned children, and the gifted and talented learners. After review, the 2018 policy gave much priority to learners with physical disabilities, though it still recognizes all disabilities and special needs.

This current definition of IE slightly differs from other studies conducted internationally. IE statement policy in UK defines IE as a process of enabling all children including those previously excluded groups to learn and participate effectively within mainstream school systems (Save the Children UK, 2016). It not only works with learners but includes families and local community to build support in IE. In SA, IE has been defined as “a learning environment that promotes full personal, academic and professional development of all learners irrespective of race, class, gender, disability, religion, culture, sexual preference learning style and language.” (Department of Education, 2007). The SA policy acknowledges that all learners have the ability to gain knowledge given the correct support, just like the UK policy. It also recognizes that the difference in learners is a source of diversity

The Kenyan policy aligns the provision of education and training to the Constitution of Kenya 2010, the Basic Education Act (2013), as well as the Sustainable Development Goal No. 4 which is also working on Equitable, Inclusive Quality Education and lifelong learning for all. In this regard, the policy framework recognizes the importance of inclusive education by emphasizing on the need for all learners to learn together in an inclusive environment. However,

the policy is flexible enough to recognize that there are learners and trainees with severe disabilities and may therefore require special institutions and home-based care.

There are several barriers to an inclusive education setting, which generally include attitudes of stake holders, environmental conditions surrounding Inclusive schools and informational barriers (UN, 2016). In Kenya, attitudinal barriers take the form of prejudice, discrimination and stigma toward persons with disabilities. In terms of environmental barriers, schools are not all physically accessible. The transport systems are not accessible to persons with disabilities. In addition, the barriers include the curriculum being not responsive to the needs of learners and trainees with disabilities.

Even though the Ministry of Education has laid down strategies to eliminate the above-mentioned barriers, most of them are still slowing down the implementation process as. The strategies include: Allocating adequate resources to sustain inclusive education, undertaking piloting process for inclusive education and training, establishing and developing an effective communication strategy advocating for and raising awareness on inclusive education and training, implementing inclusive education and training in all programs and levels of learning and undertaking research on inclusive education periodically (Sector policy document, p.12). Most of these strategies were found out to be the major challenges affecting implementation of IE in secondary schools within Kisumu County. It is therefore recommendable that follow-up be done to ensure that IE becomes a success.

5.7 RECOMMENDATIONS

Inclusion is explored along three interconnected dimensions, which is creating inclusive cultures, producing inclusive policies and evolving inclusive practices (Booth & Ainscow, 2002).

Inclusive cultures have been partially created in some schools, though most schools lack policies to guide the inclusive practice. The government through the Ministry of Education should make a follow-up to ensure that all school have access to the policy document for guidance before they are able to produce their own policies thus evolving inclusive practices

5.7.2 Limitations of the Study

The number of participants who were involved during data collection were few and originating from same region. Six school principals were interviewed and therefore the responses received may not be used to generalize the knowledge of school principals and their attitude towards implementation of IE within Kisumu County. In order to get the broader view about the implementation process, the officials from the ministry of education and teachers service commission would be interviewed to know how they are ensuring implementation of IE.

5.8 AREAS FOR FURTHER STUDIES

Follow-up from the ministry being the major challenge observed from both the interviews and sector policy document analysis, further studies could be conducted incorporating the officials from the sub-county and county education offices with the main intent of understanding how awareness creation can be done to educate all stakeholders about inclusive education.

5.9 CONCLUSION OF THE STUDY

This study has revealed the extent to which secondary school principals within Kisumu County understand the notion of Inclusive Education and what their attitudes are in terms of the

implementation process. Inclusive Education is just upcoming in Kenya and therefore needs more implementation strategies and proper utilization of resources as well as follow-up to succeed. The literature review revealed that in most studies school principals and teachers have a positive attitude towards Inclusive education. There were however various challenges that hindered the implementation process as the studies reveal. This study has also highlighted some of the challenges that are experienced by the principals during enrolment of learners with special educational needs and during the implementation process. The principals however, being positive about the implementation process provided various possible mitigations to the cited challenges.

In summary, the principals understand Inclusive Education as a form of social justice, support, equity and equality to the learners. Most of them have a positive attitude towards the implementation process and perceives it as a way of improving the learning process for all learners. The cited challenges included lack of sufficient skills and knowledge to handle learners with SEN thus need for comprehensive training. The principals also noted lack of funds to facilitate improvement of infrastructure in inclusive schools and the high pupil teacher ratio that made contact time between the teacher and learner be limited due to few skilled teaching staff. Communication between the government and principals on matters inclusive education is minimal and therefore the principals suggested that there should be frequency in communication, collaboration and follow-up. The sector policy document also needs to be reviewed and definition of Inclusive education in it to include all learners. The objectives of the overarching theme are seen to be in accordance with the mitigations pointed out. Inclusive education should be supported by all stakeholders.

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Appendices

Appendix 1 : Interview Protocol

Project Title: Exploring the Knowledge and attitude of school principals towards the implementation of Inclusive Education as defined in the Sector policy for learners and trainees with disabilities in Kisumu County, Kenya.

Time and Date of Interview: November 2021 – December 2021	Place: Kisumu County
Interviewee:	Gender:
Site:	
Contact details:	

This study is exploring what the principals know about IE and it's the implementation at high school level. As part of this study, you have been invited to participate in an interview. During the interview session you will be asked some open-ended questions related to your knowledge, beliefs and values in terms of Inclusive education at high school level. The interview session will be recorded for the purpose of transcription and data analysis. Your acceptance to participate will be highly appreciated. As part of privacy protection, pseudonym will be used when referring to personal experiences. The results of the study will be utilized solely for completion of research purposes. The interview will take 1 hour per session.

Interview Questions.

1. For how long have you been in the teaching profession?
2. How long have you served in the position of a school principal?
3. How long have you served in the same position in this particular school?
4. Is this the first institution to be in the position of a school principal?
5. What do you know about the sector policy for learners and trainees with disabilities?
6. What is your understanding on Inclusion?
7. What is your opinion about the overarching theme of Inclusive Education on the sector policy?
8. Do you think the IE part of the policy has been elaborated enough?

9. Has the introduction of IE affected your teaching career? How?
10. What is your opinion on introduction of IE in place of Special Education
11. Are you implementing IE in your school?
12. Do you have a school policy for IE in relation to sector policy especially
 - a) During admission of new students
 - b) On teaching pedagogy
 - c) On anti-bullying
13. Do you consider the learners physical and academic abilities during enrolment?
14. What are the challenges that you are encountering during the implementation process
15. How can the above mentioned challenges be mitigated
16. What support is available for the implementation process
17. How would you ensure that IE is implemented in your school? (If number 10 is no)
18. Where do you see IE in Kenya, in the next five years?
19. Can you think of any other thing apart from those we spoke about in your opinion that can make inclusive education work or be more successful in Kenyan high schools?

Appendix 2 s