

Strategies that promote inclusive education and assessment practice for learners with disability. Teachers' Perspective in a Kenyan context.

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ABSTRACT

The movement to educate learners with disabilities (LWD) in more inclusive settings has created greater need for both teachers and curriculum evaluators to have tools, to assess these students in multiple environments. Whereas the examination bodies seem to be supporting appropriate pedagogy in assessing academic achievement for the LWD, actualizing these theoretical notions remains a challenge. This paper endeavors to discuss teachers' perceptions of inclusive education and the assessment strategies for the LWD in a Kenyan context. The study was guided by the theory of Vygotsky which is based on the understanding of human cognition. A case study design was favored in a mixed method paradigm. The key question raised was how inclusive education and assessment strategies for LWD can be promoted in Kenya. Teachers teaching in special school were skeptical about inclusive education while those teachers that had included LWD in the classroom said it was workable. Teachers felt that the provisions given by Kenya National Examinations Council (KNEC) for LWD were inadequate and discriminative. Testing does not begin immediately after an appropriate measure has been selected. The tester must be adequately prepared to administer and score the test and must be trained. Equally important is the need for an integral approach to education assessment issues in an inclusive setting both in Kenya and regionally.

OPERATIONAL DEFINITION OF KEY TERMS

- Assessment** : Systematic process of gathering educationally relevant information to make legal and instructional decisions about the provision of special services to learners with disability.
- Inclusive education:** Educational provision that calls for the school to modify the learning environment to suit the needs of the learners with disabilities such that they are able to learn in regular schools together with peers.
- Strategies** : Peculiar or typical methods which parents / teachers may use to teach or assess learners in inclusive setting.

Introduction

Contemporary thinking propagates that all children, regardless of ability, should be educated in the general classroom. The Persons with Disabilities Act (GOK, 2003), states that special needs of persons with disabilities shall be put into consideration in all learning institutions and also provision of auxiliary services to facilitate learning process for these persons. The main question however is, how effectively has this been achieved? Efforts by various researchers to investigate

challenges that may influence Education for All (EFA) goals may remain unresolved if the perceptions of teachers that may influence inclusive education and assessment strategies for the learners with disabilities are not addressed. This article discusses a small selection of the evidence from a small scale research that explored the inherent social cultural perceptions of teachers that may influence implementation of inclusive education and assessment strategies for the learners with disabilities in a Kenyan context. The key question raised was how the general perceptions of teachers influence implementation of inclusive education and assessment. The study was guided by the theory of Vygotsky whose theory is based on the understanding of human cognition and learning as a social and cultural interaction. This theory creates the foundation for the development of alternative methods and a positive differential approach that can fully develop a handicapped child's higher psychological functions and overall personality (Vygotsky, 1978). This theory lays the foundation for inclusive education.

Contextual issues

In Kenya, the Ministry of Education Science and Technology (MoEST) has developed an Inclusive Education Policy to ensure that children are admitted into schools of their choice and have a say in their education program. Among the key policies stipulated in the Sessional Paper no. 6 (GOK, 1988) is the integration of children with disability and enrolment in special education programs. The 1999 Koech Report led to further improvement by including improved diagnostic assessment and intervention measures, free education, adapted curriculum and examination. However, the report reveals that there are no provisions put in place for some categories of candidates like the learning disabilities, physically handicapped, gifted & talented and the autistic during examinations. There are inadequate trained personnel to administer national examinations, inadequate equipment and services and rigid educational systems that are only geared towards learners without SN (GOK, 1999). According to the policy framework of 2009, Kenya, and indeed other African nations, is far from achieving inclusion of persons with disabilities in the regular education and assessment. The Constitution of Kenya 2010, states that a person with disability is entitled to access educational institutions and facilities for persons with disabilities that are integrated into the society and also to access materials and devices to overcome constraints arising from the person's disability, Article no. 54:1; e; (ROK 2010). The education pillar in the Kenya Vision 2030, aims to develop key programmes for learners with special needs. The Kenya Institute of Curriculum Development (KICD) has adapted syllabi for specialized areas which are currently in operation. These areas include; the Kenyan Sign Language (KSL) for the hearing impaired students, Braille for the visually impaired, physical education for the physically impaired and curriculum guidelines for special schools for both teachers and learners.

Generally, access and participation of pupils with special needs is low and their needs are not being specifically addressed, especially children with behavioural difficulties, those with various forms of learning difficulties and attention deficit, gifted and talented. According to Sessional paper 14, the emphasis on academic performance and examinations creates an unfavourable learning environment for children with disabilities and even moderate learning difficulties. This poses a challenge to the integration and inclusion of children with such disabilities in regular schools. The absence of reliable data on children with special needs across all levels of education and inadequate funding constrains special education service delivery and planning. (ROK, 2012)

The Kenya National Examinations Council (KNEC) as the national assessment centre is mandated to conduct school and post school national examinations and award certificates to successful candidates that are inclusive of learners with special needs (ROK, 2009). KNEC has put one of its measures as enhancing Special Needs Education (SNE) section to address issues related to candidates with disabilities. KNEC has provided special considerations to learners with different categories of disabilities during national examinations such as Braille, large print, an allowance of extra time based on a $33\frac{1}{3}\%$ of the allocated time for the paper to those candidates who require it, Kenyan Sign Language (KSL), the use of special rooms and involvement of an assistant and examination facilitation in special circumstances. KNEC also adapts and adopts examination papers for SNE candidates to meet their specific needs. Further, KNEC has developed a draft policy to guide the assessment of candidates. It has also enhanced its research function to carry out more empirical research in order to inform policy on education assessment. A National Assessment centre was established to monitor learners' achievements; the candidates with special needs included. The review of examination performance for the learners with Special Needs by KNEC shows that despite increased educational opportunities for learners with disabilities, a significant proportion of them continue to perform dismally in national examinations. In 2009 Kenya Certificate of Secondary Education (KCSE) examination, 1, 495 candidates with special needs were enrolled for the examination and out of this, less than half scored a mean grade of D+ (4 points on a 12 point scale) (KNEC, 2009). According to Isanda (2011) "*A negative feature in Kenya's education indexes reveals, repetitive poor performance in national examinations, low transition rates and premature exits*".

At the University of Cambridge International Examinations (UCIE) ,candidates who have permanent disabilities or who suffer from medical conditions which affect performance at the time of the examinations apply beforehand for special provisions that allow them access the examinations in advance. These candidates must therefore provide professional documentary/clinical evidence to confirm diagnosis of disability during the application of the provisions (UCIE, 2009). In the Kenyan perspective, prior to the registration of candidates for KCPE and KCSE, information regarding the nature and degree of disability is captured. Additionally, comprehensive assessment of learners with special needs is carried out by the examination management division and the SNE section of KNEC to establish the type and extent of disability in order to put in place special provisions as per the need. During test development, KNEC adapts or adopts examination resources to suit specific needs of candidates with special needs. Another provision is the access to human resource persons who involve readers, scribes, transcribers and interpreters. This enables the candidates to show what they know and can do without changing the demands of assessment. During the marking of scripts for candidates with special needs, competent SNE examiners with specialization in relevant areas are involved. To avoid transfer of errors, Braille scripts are marked directly without de-brailing. At the processing stage, KNEC compensates candidates with special needs on questions that the candidates may have found difficult to attempt due to the nature of their disabilities. There is every reason, therefore, for KNEC to source for accurate measurements which ensure that examinations are a true test of candidates' knowledge and what they are able to do.

The main concern of any researcher of goodwill is, '*how effective are the existing assessment strategies and inclusive education for learners with disabilities?*' Efforts by various researchers to investigate factors that may hinder implementation of inclusive education and assessment

strategies for the learners with disabilities may remain unresolved if the perceptions of teachers who are the key implementers of the curriculum are not addressed. Focusing on challenges alone without a thorough investigation on the perceptions of teachers may hinder identification of the inherent factors that may influence implementation of inclusive education and assessment practices for the learners with impairments.

Direction to research

The study sought opinions of teachers on workability of inclusive education and the existing assessment strategies for the learners with disabilities.

The following research questions were explored in this study:

- 1. What are the perceptions of teachers towards inclusive education and assessment strategies for the learners with disability?*
- 2. Are there any strategies developed and recommended by teachers in inclusive education and assessment?*
- 3. What are the challenges faced by candidates with special needs in inclusive education and assessment?*

Methodology

The study was carried out in four schools in four weeks, a week in every school. The schools were purposively sampled, the criteria being the type of school; the integrated and special school and the primary and secondary school factor. The case in this study was the area of disability, that is the hearing and visual impairments. The visual and hearing impairment category was selected since examinations in Kenya have been adapted for the two categories. A bio data was used to get the demographic details of the respondents and questionnaires and interview guide to get perceptions and probe on subtle issues. Observation during the discussion threw some light in regard to attitudes or opinions. The Head teachers were key informant of the study. Teachers were purposively sampled, 5 teachers were sampled from each school, and a total of 25 teachers were interviewed. The interview guide which consisted of open ended questions on issues pertinent to the research questions was administered. Questionnaires were administered to probe the existing strategies in national examinations. The study focused on perceptions of teachers in the two special and two integrated schools for visual and hearing impairment respectively in regard to implementation of inclusive education and assessment strategies for the learners with disabilities. A case study approach was adopted in a mixed method design in order to investigate the perceptions of teachers in a guided interview schedule and questionnaires.

Data analysis

In analysing the data, predetermined coding categories related to research questions were used to code the data which was analysed by the computer using the MaxQdar program. Using deductive coding, the data was divided into dimensions taken from the index. The findings were presented in thematic form. Sub categories for each dimension were derived from the data collected. Quantitative data was analysed using SPSS and presented in percentages.

Findings

Teachers' perception on inclusive education

The study established strong differences in perception among teachers in special schools on the one hand, and teachers in integrated schools on the other. Whereas the teachers in the integrated schools were satisfied and supportive to the inclusive setting; teachers in special schools were reluctant to embrace inclusion, fearing loss of the privileges that accrue from specialized institutions, arguing that the specialized attention necessary for learners with disabilities may not be accorded in an inclusive setting. To the contrary, teachers of children without disability were welcoming to inclusion, arguing that children would assist each other and this will improve performance academically and socially.

Strategies for effective inclusive practices

The study established the various strategies suggested or being adopted by teachers towards successful education of their learners with disability.

The study informants suggested that the methodology that teachers adapt should have the learners with impairment in mind. For example a teacher teaching a class with children with visual impairment should limit visual aids while for the HI the teacher should use more of visual aids and write most of the things on the chalkboard for the learners to copy. Teachers can prepare Individual Education Program (IEP) for the learners and introduce peer tutoring for pupils to assist each other.

The informants were in agreement that teachers should be trained on relevant skills in order to take care of the learning needs of LWD effectively. One teacher observed that trained teachers handled the children quite differently from those that had no training. Training helps to change the attitude of teachers towards the learners with disability and also enhances making of appropriate learning resources. The training should start from the college level if inclusive education was to succeed. The government should come out to train more teachers and this may help in reducing negative attitude.

The study reviewed teachers' sensitization and motivation was very important for successful inclusive education. This can be achieved through holding short seminars and practise of team work. The teachers can also be given motivation to compensate for the extra time used during remedial teaching. There should be in-service for both the teachers and also all stakeholders should be given seminar on how to handle inclusive education. The students, parents and teachers should meet and consult on how best to go about the inclusive education. The learners in the regular school should be sensitised to understand and accept the children with disability in the school and assist them to cope. Parents could check the children's work and assist in home work.

Concerning equipment the informants suggested that teachers should organise relevant learning resources such as audio visual aids. The government should also come in to provide physical facilities such as hearing aids and Braille machines and subsidize the cost of the hearing aids to a price affordable by parents. The infrastructure in schools should be improved to suit the various disabilities. The parents can assist in providing all required facilities for their child's education. The interpreters should be increased at least one per class and the class size should also be manageable.

Challenges faced in inclusive education

The study findings revealed that teachers in regular schools refuse to admit learners with disabilities fearing that they may lower the standards mean score for the class since teacher performance is evaluated in terms of mean score in final exam. The teachers do not appreciate the learners with hearing impairment: They look at them as failures and they fear that the school mean score may drop. Johnson & Liddell et al (1989), acknowledges that all students should be allowed to demonstrate their ability under assessment and examination conditions. Further, the Americans with Disability Act (1990) agree that special provisions that do not fundamentally alter measurement of skills or knowledge of assessment program in the test need to be put in place for candidates with special needs. These special provisions are also granted for candidates who incur temporary disabilities when the examination is on-going.

Other difficulties experienced included, the teachers in regular schools not having enough knowledge on how to handle the learners with disabilities hence some children withdraw from school. The children need appreciation, when ignored they tend to withdraw and close up. The teachers noted that the students with impairment are very enthusiastic to learn if proper attention and text books are given. However, when asked if they employed any special strategies in evaluating the learners with special needs, they affirmed that they had not developed any special examinations. Personnel working with candidates with special needs will vary with the candidates' specific needs. These personnel include teachers trained in special needs education, national examination setters and moderators, supervisors, invigilators, examiners, interpreters, readers and care -givers among others. Other stakeholders that may be involved, albeit indirectly, include officers from MOEST, KICD, TSC and KISE. For all these special needs categories of candidates, the personnel involved ought to acquire the minimum academic qualification and undergo adequate professional training in the areas of specialization in order to dispense of their duties effectively (Chitiyo & Wheeler 2004). According to a MoE 2003, there were 4225 trained teachers in special needs education and an estimated 1.8 million potential learners who had special needs in education giving a teacher to learner ratio of 1:425 (GoK 2003, cited in Mundi, 2009). This statistic raises a pertinent issue regarding the standard ratio set for Learners with disability verses the teachers.

The students with hearing impairment used Kenyan sign language which is different from the signed exact English hence had difficulties in language subjects. The teachers attributed this to the poor performance in national examination. The findings in this study agree with the findings of smith (1998), that teacher's positive attitude to inclusive education is dependent on provision of necessary facilities and relevant training. Another challenge that featured in the findings was the negative attitude towards persons with disability. The teacher gave an example of the persons with visual impairment who are looked at as abnormal (with some mental challenges) and that they cannot perform academically. Such a belief may influence teacher's attitude towards such learners. The teachers also gave existing cultural beliefs as a hindrance to inclusive learning. There is a belief that interaction with a person with disability may make a person give birth to a child with disability.

The teachers who had integrated learners with hearing impairment argued that the learners in integrated schools are already facing problems; they lack enough trained teachers, and many

cannot follow the adapted programme. Where integration is taking place, the regular teachers kept referring the learners to the special education teacher. In secondary school it was even worse because there was no trained special teacher. Even when a resource teacher is put in place, the teacher is not conversant with all subjects. It was a challenge to employ interpreters for all classes hence this was quite hectic for teachers. Therefore if integration has all these problems then we are far from inclusive education. Moreover, the current over enrolment problems in primary schools due to free primary education cannot cope with inclusive education.

Other challenges are the inadequate finance to purchase facilities and adapt school environment. The trained teachers are few. Cultural beliefs exist that limit enrolment and involvement. There is a negative attitude by all stakeholders; parents, teachers, children, administrators and even policy makers. There are few medical facilities which are far and also expensive. There is also a fear of losing sponsorship and the accrued benefits by the teachers in special schools. The environment may not be suitable; some places are hilly and waterlogged. Others include few interpreters for the hearing impaired, and lack of sign names in some subjects and communication barrier. There is limited time for remedial teaching. The number in class is too large and parents are not bothered about their children's education.

Benefits of inclusive education

One teacher in support of inclusive education purported that; *Inclusive learning exposes the learner to difficulties of the world at early stages of life and enables them to cope and become self independent* (Teacher, 2010). They are equipped with necessary life skills, they learn from peers and socially they feel accepted, their morale is boosted which translated into better academic performance. Teachers were also in agreement that the community is able to appreciate them when they find they can perform just like any other child or better and parents stop looking at them as a burden.

Another strong confession that supported inclusive education was improved academic performance by the learners with impairments in regular school. This motivated the teachers as well as the other children and brought competition in the class. *The morale of the children with visual impairment was uplifted and they are able to appreciate themselves and work harder.* Inclusive learning opens the children with disability to formal learning and they can excel for higher learning just like any other child. Teachers also strongly felt that interaction in inclusive setting helps to eradicate the negative attitude by other children, teachers and parents, and brought appreciation.

Assessment for learners with disabilities: What does KNEC offer?

The study further sought to find out whether the head teachers and teachers were aware of the KNEC provisions for candidates with special needs in examinations. The majority of them expressed awareness about extra-time and some reported awareness of only particular categories of special needs while others were not sure of any such provisions. The findings revealed that all the candidates with special needs in both primary and secondary schools requested for extra time. However, a majority had objection to 'blanket time' and instead proposed time with discrimination. A significant number of teachers requested for sign systems 18.4% and interpreters 10.9% in KCPE and KCSE, 7.17% and 4.93% also requested for large print materials for both KCPE and KCSE respectively. The teachers gave other provisions available for candidates with special needs during KCPE and KCSE such as; adapted English paper for hearing impaired and administration of examinations in the candidate's convenient environment

e.g. hospitals. The candidates seemed comfortable with the provisions of Braille materials. The study revealed that some of the provisions were not tailored to the needs of the individual candidates. For example, the recommendation on extra time based on 33.3% of the allocated time per paper (KNEC Draft, 2010) and the provision on large print material do not suit all candidates with special needs. Despite the fact that KNEC makes provisions for candidates with special needs during examinations, the study findings indicate that not all categories of candidates with special needs are catered for.

With regard to flexibility of existing KNEC policies and regulations regarding examinations for candidates with special needs, only 27% responded that the policies were flexible, while a substantial majority of 40% considered the policies fairly flexible and while 14.4% of the respondents indicated that they were rigid. From these findings, a majority of the respondents were not satisfied with the flexibility of the existing KNEC policies and regulations governing examinations offered to candidates with special needs. This could be attributed to the fact that there is no room to accommodate new innovations on provisions to take care of all the categories of candidates with special needs during the examinations. This may be as a result of a lack of an official KNEC policy on examinations offered to candidates with SN. The existing KNEC draft on Policy does not comprehensively address the individual needs of all the candidates with Special Needs. For instance, for examinations and assessment of candidates with special needs it proposes that the 'extra time' allowed shall be based on 33.3 % of the allocated time for any one examination paper. However, this does not take into account the specific needs of individual candidates. 20.1% of the teachers considered the KNEC policies appropriate, 37.1% of them considered the policies average while 37.7% considered the policies inappropriate and 21.9% did not respond to the questionnaire, thus presenting mixed feelings as regards the appropriateness of the assessment policies. Most of the respondents were aware of the existence of the KNEC policies and regulations governing examinations for candidates with special needs. This finding supports poor implementation of existing provisions for the period of examinations, hence disadvantaging the candidates with SN.

Challenges in assessment practices for the learners with disabilities

According to the teachers, a number of categories of disabilities are not accommodated in assessment considerations by KNEC. These include; candidates with learning disabilities, emotional and behavioral difficulties, cerebral palsy, autism, gifted and talented, mentally challenged, deaf blind and communication difficulties among others. These students are challenged for the period of national examinations' administration, in areas that include; setting exams, piloting exams, assessment of candidates, recruitment and training of exam personnel, examination administration, marking exams, grading, certification and results dissemination.

The teachers echoed that the free primary education has led to growing numbers of candidates with SN hence another challenge that demands an increase in specialized operations to respond to the diverse assessment needs of the various categories of candidates with SN. The increase has led to; *inaccessible information and communication, inaccessible physical facilities and premises, disability unfriendly projects and activities, discriminating policies and practices, discriminating students on assumption of poor performance as a result of disability and the lack of systems and specialized facilities that respond to the diverse assessment needs of the various categories of candidates with SN.* (Teacher, 2010)

Some of these challenges include but are not limited to; *inability to interpret policies, restrictive environment, poor curriculum and examination comprehension, lack of awareness, incoherence in partners, high cost of provisions, blanket allocation of 'extra time', presentation of poor/illegible handwriting, inadequate personnel, untrained personnel and discrimination.*

Uganda National Examination Board (UNEB) has tried to provide relatively acceptable and reliable assessment to various categories of candidates with special educational needs. However, the board contends that much as learners with special needs are educable, not all of them have potential to sit a standardized national examination either in totality or in part (Alenyo, 2007). Several factors may impact on the ability of candidates with special needs to undertake an assessment task. To uphold the principles of assessment, it is necessary to take into account the characteristics of these candidates.

What is the way forward to assessment for LWD

Head teachers and teachers in special and inclusive settings responded to the question on how to improve examinations provisions for candidates with special needs. KNEC should participate in identification of candidates with SN. They further suggested that; the categories, nature and levels of SN be considered in exam administration. Current practice in the identification does not involve KNEC, as it is head teachers who identify and send a report to KNEC. This may have loopholes. KNEC can therefore make its own provision for exams identification e.g. in the registration process.

The teacher's felt that KNEC should consider a review of the current curricular in order to meet the candidates' specific SN in examinations. They further proposed for different types of curricula to be put in place so as to cater for all levels of SN; adopted, adapted, specialized and specialist. Curriculum development and review of the same is carried out by Kenya Institute of Curriculum Development (KICD) and not KNEC, this shows ignorance in the part of the respondents on the existing education systems.

Timing of examinations was another critical issue raised, a break in the middle of a 3 hour examination was proposed. This will support the different categories of candidates SN who are challenged in educational settings i.e. candidates who have Attention Deficient and Hyperactive Disorders and Autistic Spectrum Disorders who have difficulty in concentration on test items for extended length of time, completing examinations within the allocated time and are easily distracted. On the current provision of 'time', they proposed that the extra time should be provided according to different categories and different levels of SN.

On examination papers, they requested for adaptations in different papers to suit different levels and categories of disabilities. Currently, KNEC has already put in place this provision for 2 categories; visually impaired (VI) and hearing impaired (HI). However, the other categories need to be considered for the same in order to give them an equal playing ground in national examinations.

Special grading and certification for candidates with SN during the period of national examinations was proposed. The provision of special grading can be made possible during the release of examination results, the best candidate in HI and VI. The provision of certification has already been taken care of during the examination processes; in setting, moderation and marking.

On the support services and guidance and counseling requested; the personnel working with candidates with SN in examinations' management ought to have SN component that is relevant to specific settings. I.e. a person with background training in HI ought to administer examinations to candidates with HI. These relevant personnel understand the behavioral characteristics of specific category of candidates with SN, hence provide the essential guidance and counseling.

They recommended that KNEC needs to strengthen their channels of communication with stakeholders. For example, they noted that there is a disparity between the bio data on candidates with SN and the provision given by KNEC to respective candidates in examination centers. KNEC's sensitization structures on candidates with SN also gave the impression that it was weak, as the respondents felt that KNEC's operations were unknown. Therefore, KNEC ought to open clear communication channels, present feedback and share information with relevant stakeholders.

Conclusion Remarks

The findings of the study show that teachers feel that inclusive education is possible and it can succeed. It requires attention of the government to train teachers and provide necessary facilities and equipments. It also revealed that social and cultural beliefs exist that makes all the stakeholders not to be actively involved in the education of the learners with impairments. However results show that such beliefs can be eradicated by training, sensitization, and seminars. The MOEST recognizes the needs of various learners with disabilities as provided for in legal frameworks such as; The Constitution of Kenya, (2010), The Persons with Disability Act, (2003), and has put in place measurements to accommodate them in the educational system. From an early age, children with special needs are identified and placement in various institutions done through EARCs. The government endeavors to provide but not limited to; grants, specialized and adapted curricular, equipment, basic learning resources, institutional facilities, salaries, housing, personnel trained in SNE and enabling environments. However, learners with SNE have continued to underperform in national exams; registering low grades, low transition rates, premature exist from the system and very low participation in economic activities in the country. KNEC has identified this problem and has instituted a number of provisions aimed at mitigating these challenges in examinations. Currently, KNEC provides candidates with special needs with the provision of extra time (30 minutes), examinations in Kenyan sign language and examinations and support materials in Braille among others.

With the increasing complexities in curricular and emerging issues in special education, KNEC' undertaking in availing provisions to candidates with special needs in examinations is a milestone in improving their overall performance. This is confirmed by Isanda (2011) that accommodations enable students with disabilities, to experience what their counterparts without disabilities have enjoyed all along. It is also hoped to be the signal to end their exclusion from significant areas of life and hopefully enable them to compete favorably.

In conclusion, the findings confirm that provisions for candidates with special needs will offer equitable playing ground in national examinations, thus laying a firm foundation in further education for learners with special needs.

Recommendations

There is urgent need for awareness and sensitizations on examinations provisions for candidates with special needs. There should be closer networking and collaboration with other stakeholders who provide services to candidates with special needs. This is likely to improve efficiency and effectiveness of examinations administration.

The government should come up with a clear policy towards implementation of inclusive education. The present policies and Acts that support SNE should be mainstreamed and strengthened and sensitize school administration and personnel working with candidates with SN on policies that support provisions. The KNEC policy on examinations for candidates with special needs should be revised to reflect advancements in special needs.

KNEC needs to expand her role in pre-examinations assessment of candidates with special needs by linking with EARC databases, and other organizations working for and with learners with special needs. Currently, examination candidates with special needs are registered based on recommendations by head teachers. KNEC should play a greater role by quality-assuring this registration process to ensure that the records match the actual candidate profiles. There is need to institutionalize monitoring and evaluation of examination provisions for candidates with special needs.

KNEC and KICD need to broaden the categories of disabilities being considered so as to expand examination provisions for the same candidates. KNEC should institute differentiated extra time provisions for candidates with different categories and levels of special needs.

There is need for further resource mobilization by KNEC and the Ministry of Education to meet the expanded provisions for candidates with special needs. KNEC should develop a SNE Skills Database for educational personnel to enable effective deployment for examinations administration and processing.

Teachers should be actively involved in regional integration of inclusive education and planning assessment strategies for learners with disabilities. Equally important is the need for an integral approach to education assessment issues in an inclusive setting both in Kenya and regionally. An integral multi-sectoral and collaborative approach is necessary to guarantee achievement of EFA goals in Africa.

Further research in the area of assessment for the LWD in an inclusive setting covering all the diversities is a national and international concern.

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