

Internal Efficiency of Special Needs Education Institutions on Access to Primary Education of Learners with Mental Learning Needs in Siaya County, Kenya

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Abstract

The challenge posed by the new approaches aimed at increasing access to education by learners with mental learning needs in Kenya requires re-appraisal of the institutions. This study is an attempt to analyze the internal efficiency of special needs education (SNE) institutions and discuss its influence on access to primary education of learners with mental learning needs in Siaya County. The study attempted to answer the following themes from research questions: internal efficiency of the selected SNE schools, cause of inefficiencies, enrollment rates, and causes of low enrollment rates, relationship between IE and GER and finally measures to solve inefficiencies. Case study research design was used. The sample consisted of 7 schools: the 3 public special schools purposively selected and 4 mainstream units selected using simple random sampling from the mainstream units in Siaya County. Respondents consisted of 7 head teachers purposively selected 30 teachers selected using simple random sampling and the data collection instruments included teachers' questionnaires, interviews schedules, observation checklists and document analysis guides. The data were analyzed using descriptive statistics with the help of SPSS version 20 and presented in table and graphs. The findings revealed that public special schools had higher IE co-efficient (13.75%) than mainstream /special units (33.27%). A direct relationship between internal efficiency and access rate (GER) was established. It was concluded that inclusive learning has not been embraced in Siaya County and enrollment rate of these learners are still very low. The study recommends thorough sensitization of the parents and the community as a whole besides increasing governments' allocation to EARC offices and SNE institutions. It is hoped that these measures will ensure efficient institutions and in turn 100% access rate of these learners in Siaya County.

Key words: Internal Efficiency, Special Needs Education Institutions, Primary Education Learners with Mental Learning Needs, Siaya County, Kenya.