

Factors Influencing Provision of Play and Learning Materials among Children with Physical Challenges a Case Study of Joytown Special School, Kiambu County

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Abstract

In Kenya there is still a high population of children either born with or who develop physical challenges. These children are often neglected and most do not join school at the expected age. In joining school they encounter several difficulties in their play and learning activities. These children with physical challenges have developmental needs and rights like other children but due to their exceptionality they call for more attention in provision of adequate quality play and learning materials to enhance their holistic development. However, it is apparent that provision of materials to children with physical challenges has not been possible due to various factors which are not yet understood. The purpose of this study was to investigate the role of parents in the provision of play and learning materials to children who are physically challenged. The study sought to establish parents' involvement in provision of play and learning materials and factors influencing the kind of support they offer. The study was carried out in Joytown Primary School for the Physically Challenged in Thika Town. The school was purposefully selected because it is best suited for the study since it caters for children in the category of special needs being addressed in the study that is physical challenges. Case study design was used in order to gather in-depth information about roles of stakeholders in support of physically challenged children. Target population of the study was 100 children with physical challenges, 200 parents and 4 teachers and the head teacher. Stratified random sampling method was employed to arrive at a Sample size of 30 children with physical challenges, purposive and opportunity sampling to arrive at 30 parents and purposive sampling to arrive at 4 teachers. Therefore, the total sample size was 64. The data were collected using various techniques which included questionnaires for the teachers, interview schedules for parents and observation schedules for children. Collected data were analyzed using both quantitative and qualitative methods. Quantitative methods entailed use of descriptive statistics such as frequencies and percentages which enhanced discussion of qualitative data which was organized into themes and categories and presented in discussion form. Microsoft excel was used to ease data analysis. The study established that parental involvement in provision of play and learning materials is minimal. The major factors which influenced support offered by parents' were inadequate finance and complexity of some physical challenges which requires further investigation to establish the most appropriate play and learning materials to suit the needs of the child. It was evident that children were capable of engaging in various plays and learning activities where appropriate play and learning materials were availed consequently enhancing holistic development. The main recommendation of the study is that government should have a budgetary allocation meant specifically for purchase of play and learning materials and maintenance of facilities since it's a noble course which would ensure that children are actively involved in play and learning activities therefore enhancing holistic development molding children with physical challenges to become self-reliant and productive citizens.

Keywords: Provision of Play and Learning Materials, Physical Challenges

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