

Technical and Visual Aid Services as Determinants to Academic Progress of Learners with Learning Impairments in Early Childhood Education in Kenya.

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Abstract

The requirement by the Kenyan government to have equity in provision of education services has led to a paradigm shift towards inclusive education. Existing evidence however tends to suggest that children with HI, on average are not socially or emotionally comfortable in mainstream settings. Besides, although progress in the teaching and learning of children with HI exist, other evidence still emerges of the relative lack of academic improvement among this group of children. This study therefore aimed at establishing the effect of support services offered to children with HI in the inclusive context on their academic progress. It specifically sought to establish the effect of technical support and use of visual aids on academic progress of this category of learners. The study was conducted in Turbo Sub-county of Uasin Gishu County in Kenya and adopted casual comparative research design. Both stratified random and simple random sampling techniques were used to select a sample of 117 ECDE teachers and 59 head-teachers from the 76 ECDE centers in the sub-county. Mean response scores together with associated standard deviations were used to examine prevailing levels of identified support services in the centers. Multiple regressions were used to determine contributions of the support services on academic progress of children with HI. The study established that support services offered to children with HI in the regular classroom, positively and significantly affects their academic progress. The study however revealed that inclusion of children with HI in regular classroom contexts was a major challenge to teachers who were not trained to handle this category of learners and lack equipment to support them technically.

Key Words: Technical Support, Visual Aids, Academic Progress, Learning Impairments and Early Childhood Education.

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