

An Analysis of Approaches used to Train Learners with Autism Spectrum Disorders Human Occupation Skills in Selected Special Units, Mombasa County, Kenya

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Abstract

This study aimed at finding out the instructional strategies used to train learners with autism spectrum disorders (ASD) human occupation skills. It was intended to establish whether teachers of children with ASD have adequate knowledge and skills to determine the educational needs of learners with ASD. It also investigated the existing instructional methods used in educating children with ASD human occupation skills, and established the level of awareness among teachers on the characteristics of learners with ASD. The study employed quantitative approach. The target population was 435 respondents, 90 teachers and 345 learners with special needs. The sample comprised of 15 teachers and 30 pupils. Questionnaires were used to collect data from teachers. The researcher used an observation checklist to check the approaches used by teachers in training human occupations and characteristics exhibited by learners with ASD. Content validity will be determined by experts in the field of special needs. The tools were piloted in special units in Kilifi County, Kenya to determine their reliability. Data collected was analyzed using descriptive and inferential statistics using Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS). Data was presented in graphs and tables. The study also found out that majority of the teachers preferred using Individualized Education Plan to train learner in human occupation skills. Further, the study found out that there were inadequate teachers trained in human occupation skills as well as managing learners with autism. The study found out that majority of the learners with autism had echolalia and lack of control of emotion and throwing tantrums. The study recommends that Ministry of Education Science & Technology should employ more teachers trained in Special Needs Education in special schools, review curriculum for teacher training colleges to inculcate management for learners with specific conditions such as ASD and more in-service training on special needs teachers regarding approaches for training learners with ASD.

Key words: Autism Spectrum Disorders, Human Occupations, Instructional Strategies

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