

## Effective Provision of Inclusive Education: Coping with Constraints in Public Secondary Schools in Rongo District, Migori County, Kenya.

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### ABSTRACT

This study sought to examine the constraints hindering effective provision of inclusive education with the objective of devising strategies to be employed to cope with these bottlenecks. The study was premised on classical liberal theory and social Darwinism which asserts that every citizen should be given opportunity through education. Descriptive research design employing multi-case studies was adopted. Purposive sampling was utilized to draw 170 subjects comprising of students with special education needs, teachers, school principals and Ministry of Education officers (MoEs) in the study locale. Data was collected using questionnaires for students and teachers and interview schedules for school principals. Quantitative data from questionnaires was analyzed using descriptive statistics while qualitative data from interviews was analyzed using thematic approaches and reported in narrative and direct quotes. The major findings were that the secondary schools that have embraced inclusive education were experiencing a myriad of interrelated constraints ranging from lack of physical and instructional facilities suitable for inclusive education, lack of qualified teachers to handle the inclusive education and negative attitudes by parents regarding disabled learners, amongst others. It was recommended that for the success of inclusive education to be realized pragmatic copying strategies should be introduced. These strategies should include aggressive sensitization campaigns to enable all stakeholders in education understand their roles and debunk the idea that the Government is the only body that should take full responsibility in the provision of effective inclusion education in the study locale of Rongo District, Migori County, Kenya. [240 words]

**Key Words:** Inclusive Education, Physical and human resources, Special needs, coping strategies, Secondary schools, Rongo District, Migori County, Kenya.

### INTRODUCTION

#### Background information

The issue of inclusive education is related to equity concerns which are at the centre of all social policies in Kenya (Republic of Kenya, 2003a, 2003c, 2012a; Orodho, 2014). Inclusive education can be regarded as part of a wider struggle against the violation of human rights and unfair discrimination (UNESCO, 2005). According to UNESCO (2005:12), inclusive education is a dynamic approach of responding to pupil diversity and of seeing individual differences not as problems but as opportunities for enriching learning. From this definition, it is arguable that the major tenet of inclusive education is to remove all barriers to learning in order to promote accelerated access and participation of all learners without any shade of discrimination. Thus, it is a strategic approach designed to facilitate learning and success for all children from diverse backgrounds and socio-economic as well as physical and psycho-social circumstances. The aim is to empower all stakeholders to take part in the process of democratic transformation of the country through the creation of opportunities, effective use resources and development of skills through appropriate education of all the citizens (Orodho, Waweru & Getange, 2014; Republic of Kenya, 2007). Education being the bedrock for development in any society and plays a crucial part in this process, the development of an all inclusive education system and policy becomes imperative (Orodho, 2014; Republic of Kenya, 2007).

From this point of view, the issue of having an education system that includes all categories of learners irrespective of their disability or social exclusion relates to the concept of holistic development of citizenship and goes beyond mere education empowerment and poverty alleviation of individuals and communities (Orodho, Waweru & Getange, 2014). It adopts the view of a process whereby all members of society can engage in educational and social transformation of the country with a degree of fairness and social justice. The task is

not simple, especially when the Government of Kenya inherited a long tradition of the practices of educational exclusion and marginalization, before political independence in Kenya. The task of educational transformation in post independence Kenya started with the Ominde Commission in 1964 and has been progressively transformed and refined education up to the recent Odhiambo Commission of 2010( Republic of Kenya, 2003a, 2003b,2007,2012b) . One of the challenges of implementing the recommendations of these Commissions has been to actualize the provision of education that is responsive to the special and diverse needs of learners from a broad spectrum of the Kenya population (Republic of Kenya, 2010).

The foregoing notwithstanding, the genesis of inclusive education can be traced from the concept of special education. Special education is generally conceptualized as the type of educational practice in which learners are admitted and provided with education that is commensurate to the state of the learner. The special education has undergone tremendous transformation over the past two or so decades. It has changed from categorical institutionalized special provision of education for children with special needs in education (SNE) given on the basis of nature of disability to deinstitutionalization and normalization in the past to reverse integration and finally inclusive socialization (popularly known as inclusion education) in recent years (Corbett, 2001). UNESCO (2005:15) states four principles of inclusion: i) it's a never ending search to find better ways of responding to diversity since each child have a vital contribution to make to society ; ii) inclusion is concerned with identification and removal of barriers so that SNE learners are able to work side by side with peers of diverse skills and ability to develop skills necessary to cope in society ; iii) inclusive being about patience, participation and achievements of all children for being able to access to access quality education ; and iv) inclusion involves a particular emphasis on those learners who are at risk of marginalization, exclusion or underachievement, such as special needs education learners, so that they also belong to and share normal experiences with family, neighbors and peers. The immediate implication to the introduction of inclusive education is that these educational changes occur automatically, given the education policy and the envisaged greater ownership of the policy prescriptions by teachers, school managers, students, parents, communities and private sectors. The rationale may appear to be logical from the perspective of empowerment and promotion of equal access and participation through the inclusive education policy. However, issues of a problematic nature arise when determining how schools that have traditionally excluded the disabled from the mainstream education can begin to effectively implement an inclusive education, especially if the aim is to integrate the disabled learners with the non-disadvantaged counterparts. This dimension of the problem precipitated and prompted the undertaking of the study reported in this paper.

### **State of the Art Review**

Literature generated by scholars and researchers globally tend to agree that inclusive education is the new orthodoxy in the development of special education and its conceptualization has not been clearly defined( Baker & Zigmong,2004; Blek & Nigel,2004; Barton & Amstrong,2007; Wang, Reynond & Wellbeing, 2002). Baker and Zigmong (2004) in their study of inclusion models in five USA states found that while the term inclusion had different meanings for different people, what was common was the view of it as being a place or a seat in an age appropriate mainstream classroom where a child could have access to and participate fully in the curriculum. It also meant bringing the SNE teacher or his/her assistant into that place to help make it work (Baker & Zigmong, 2004). In a national study conducted in 1995, the national centre on education restructuring and inclusion in USA further defined inclusion as:

.....the provision of services to students with disabilities including those with severe impairments in the neighborhoods schools in age appropriate general education classes with the necessary support services and supplementary aids for both the child and the teacher so as to ensure the child's success academically behaviorally and socially and also prepare the child to participate as a full and contributing member of his/her society.

Contributing to the debate, Bleck and Nigel, (2004) argue that inclusive education as a journey or movement away from the kind of segregation which separates the learners with SNE from the rest of the school. Their contention is that traditionally, children in schools have been grouped mostly according to their abilities, but with regard to learners with SNE, their grouping criteria has been their disabilities, ostensibly so that special facilities and specially trained staff can be made available to those who need them.

Inclusion is best regarded as a progressive trend for taking increasing responsibility for educating groups previously excluded from the mainstream of society (Reynolds, 2002). He sees social values about race, ethnicity, language or disability as key influences on exclusion. From this perspective, the current debate that

hinges on integration and inclusion vis-à-vis the best way of educating learners with SNE, would seem to cast some doubts on special education per se. The view that special education utilizes unique teaching materials, techniques and methods has been challenged, for example by Barton and Armstrong (2007) who failed to find evidence for distinctive SNE teaching strategies. They concluded that it was probably more useful to think of a continuum of adaptations to generally effective teaching approaches that were successful for all learners. In recent years, questions have been raised about the necessity of and desirability of systems of special education and language support which are segregated from mainstream schooling. In particular, it has been suggested that this segregation may be instrumental in contributing to prejudice and bias in schools and later in society, ( Bickel & Nickel, 2004).

This is embodied in the Salamanca statement issued by United Nations Educational Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO 2000:11) on principles, policy and practice in SNE which held that inclusion and participation were essential to human dignity and the enjoyment and exercise of human rights. Within the field of education, this is reflected in the development of strategies that seek to bring about genuine equalization of opportunities. The statement was signed by representatives of 92 governments including that of Kenya, and 25 international organizations. It calls on governments to adopt the principle of inclusive education, enrolling all children in regular schools unless there are compelling reasons for doing otherwise (UNESCO, 2000:44).

In the Kenyan situation, universal primary school education as a policy was started by the government in the year 2003. This was in perfect agreement with EFA as contained in the United Nations declaration for human rights of 1998 and reinforced by the Dakar Conference (United Nations, 2000) on EFA, initiatives in which Kenya is an active participant and signatory. Education for all is coincidentally, the second of eight millennium development goals (MDGs) which Kenya also subscribes to. This shift in emphasis from an inclusive focus on the needs of the individual pupils to an approach which focuses centrally on the skills and resources available in mainstream schools is an important difference between the earlier concept of integration and the more recent concept of inclusion (Wang, Reymond & Wellbeing, 2002).

In order to effectively implement inclusive education, educational facilities and materials are critical to the success of the educational undertaking. These include the very basic ones such as books, seats; classrooms play grounds among others. In the case of reversely integrated special schools specially adapted devices and prosthetics that enhance the functioning of individuals with SNE become imperative and where they are unavailable, improvisation may become necessary. Smith, (2004) talks of accommodations or instructional adaptations being either typical/routine, that is, strategies directed towards the whole class, or relatively minor adaptations that a teacher makes for any student, or substantial/specialized instructional adaptations, which are individually tailored adjustments to suit the needs of an individual with SNE.

With regards to the human resources, Tilstone, Florian and Rose (2005) contend that skilled support is very important especially in ensuring that there is balancing of the structured intervention to facilitate broader interaction within the integrated class/group. Reiterating the fact that training and professional supervision are increasingly important for both the teaching as well as the non-teaching staff, Tilstone et al., (2005) argue that pupils in integrated settings must be provided with skilled support so that interactions can be promoted and facilitated throughout the range of activities. For example, support staff should not sit next to a pupil with learning difficulties all the time as this approach has been shown to be a barrier to interactions and integration eventually. Rather, children should be equipped with relevant materials and an enabling environment coupled with necessary prompting for them to chart their way to independent functioning, (Bigge, 2005).

Currently, through inclusive setting, special needs education teachers are trained at Kenya Institute of Special Education (KISE) at degree and masters level at Maseno and Kenyatta University respectively, funds have been allocated to SNE teachers in special schools, but since integration begun, there has not been clear guidelines in the implementation of inclusive education which calls for the assessment on the efficiency in the provision of inclusive education. Special schools that used to serve at secondary level up to 2008, Ministry of Education report indicate that they were few and this has been depicted in the few enrolment cases realized.

In inclusive classrooms, more students with disabilities are in a general education classroom and teachers, principals and schools are held more accountable for the performance of student's and as a result, teachers and principals must provide relevant resources and have relevant skills to deal with inclusive classrooms. Bauer, et. al. (2004) noted that, "if inclusive classrooms are going to be successful, there must be changes in the traditional general education classroom of students in rows, sitting quietly, reading, taking notes and filling in worksheets.

Vergasen and Anderegg, (2000) insisted on “very good” instruction which will help every student in the classroom to achieve the best of his or her ability.

A successful teacher according to Orodho (2014) is a scientific practitioner, who observe their students, develop hypothesis about learning, develop plans, observe results, use people and resources to support their students' learning and to ensure that every student benefits, Ford and Schnorr (2001) describe principles that clarify the general considerations of inclusive settings such that, priority should be given to the development of fundamental skills which include successful interaction to complete task, solving problems and contributing to the classroom. Every student should also have the opportunity to experience mastery and accomplishment which is only possible through appropriate teaching and learning resources.

Bauer, et. al. (2004) suggest principles usually involved in the implementation of inclusive education as that of normalization which means that a person with a disability should have the opportunity to live as similarly to others as possible hence teachers must try to help students with disabilities have the same opportunities and experiences as their peers through other adjustments with the right instructional materials in their classrooms. Secondly is the principle of Natural proportion which states that classrooms should reflect the characteristics of the community at large, and the principles of problem solving other than fixing a student problem.

According to Bauer et. al. (2004), individual learning difference should be considered and support given to the needs of the individual. Since in inclusive classroom different students have different needs or level of disabilities hence instructional strategies should be organized to help guide individuals in identifying and organizing content. There should not be barriers to accessibility and acceptance of individuals with disabilities as the teachers also select and use specialized instructional strategies appropriate to the abilities and needs of the individuals. For effective instructional practices in inclusive classrooms, Bauer, et. al.(2004) puts across effective teaching strategies which include, collaboration among stakeholders such as teachers who are to involve the community, parents and students to shape and help realize a positive, appropriate learning environment as parents through the National Parents Teacher Association to help them air their views through which these students can be helped.

Students should engage in a self-directed learning environment as they learn to set goals and engage in self instruction, monitoring, and Peer supports so that the learners can be both teachers and learners in the classroom hence engage in cooperative learning. Behavior management should be adopted in inclusive classrooms through the use of effective instructional practices and classroom climate management as the teacher becomes cheerful, friendly, self-confident, good listener, realistic in their perceptions, clear, patient and determined to work with their students and firm and flexible. It is arguable that an inclusive education creates an appropriate and conducive social environment for effective learning.

In the context of the foregoing and building on Bandura (1999) perspectives, Socialization refers to passing of cultural norms and values of society to the people. Primary socialization takes place in the family while secondary socialization occurs within other areas of society such as education, work, sport and media. In the integrated setting, the learner with SNE will be exposed to role models in more areas of social endeavours in “competitive real settings” and not sheltered or over protected special school settings. The learners with SNE in an integrated setting will learn from others and others will in turn learn from them and hence mutual understanding; as opposed to what the case would be in segregative special schools.

Bandura (1987, 1990, &1999) suggests that we learn through imitation, modeling as well as through reinforcement. He concludes that as well as learning through direct reinforcement like praise, we learn through vicarious reinforcements from observing others and imitating them. We learn in a social setting with others around us and these others affect what we learn. It is the researcher's strong view that inclusive education provides a better socialization forum for both the learners with SNE and their non-exceptional peers. The fact that these noble attributes and strategies to enable all learners' access and participate in secondary schools have not been documented in the study locale and positively embraced prompted the choice of the problematique of this study.

### **The Purpose and Objectives of the Study**

This study sought to examine the constraints hindering effective provision of inclusive education and strategies being employed to cope with these bottlenecks. The Study was guided by three main objectives:

1. To examine the national status of special needs education in Kenya. To evaluate the readiness of the teachers and students for inclusive education in regular classrooms, for effective teaching and learning process.
2. To find out the challenges facing inclusion education in Rongo District, Migori County, Kenya.
3. To establish the possible policy strategies which are to be employed in addressing the factors hindering the efficient provision of inclusive education in public secondary schools in Rongo District, Migori County.

### **Theoretical Framework**

This study was premised on Bandura's Social Learning Theory propounded by Eysenck (1999). The main assumptions of this approach are that learning comes from the surroundings and the environment and that experiences shape the person's behaviour, attitudes and beliefs, and hence his/her personality. Eysenck (1999) as cited in Wamocho (2003) points out that personality research is suggestive of the fact that we human beings have a certain sort of personality, that is stable and an enduring condition. He further suggests that our personality is part of our nature and hence there is a biological basis for it, that is, it is innate. However, others suggest that nature also affects personality for example, we learn through reinforcement: - thus we tend to repeat behaviour for which we have been rewarded and tend avoid behaviour for which we have been punished. We use others around us as a reference point and learn from them. Bandura's Social Learning Theory thus suggests that we develop as individuals, through learning and socialization. This is a sharp contrast to the idea that we have an innate personality, which might or might not lead us to be, saying well in academics or sport.

In the context of this theory, it is instructive to note that even the exceptional learners can be helped to achieve their full potentials so long as an enabling environment which allows them to move about and intermingle with the wider society is provided. They have to be helped to "socialize" and in the process learn from the wider society, a prototype of which is the inclusive school setting. Thus, it is arguable that learners with SNE can considerably be empowered through the creation of enabling environment in special schools or creation of barrier-free environment through construction of ramps for wheel chair users, rough floor (non-skid) for crutches and wheel chair users, acoustic walls to aid learners with hearing impairments among other prosthetic devices in special schools.

Therefore, the adoption of Bandura's social learning theory as an element of this study's theoretical framework finds justification in terms of its advocacy on socialization as an important medium of learning. It is hoped that if learners with SNE can be placed in an inclusive education setting, then socialization which facilitates learning, will take place. It is against this backdrop that this theory was deemed appropriate to guide this study on constraints to effective implementation of inclusive education in Rongo District, Migori County, Kenya.

### **RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**

Descriptive research design employing multi-case studies was adopted. According to Orodho (2012) a case study is an in-depth investigation of a particular phenomenon and organizing the data generated by examining the phenomenon to be studied as a whole. The survey is very effective because the type of information needed such as enrolment, about people's attitudes, opinions, demands and expectations, hindrances to inclusion, financial constraints, habits or any other variety of education or social issues is obtained from school and administrative records and through case study approach (Creswell, 2009).

Purposive sampling was utilized to draw 170 subjects comprising of students with special education needs, teachers, school principals and Ministry of Education officers (MoEs) in the study locale. The criteria for sampling were based on the subjects who interact with or teach learners with special needs or are based and work in inclusive educational institutions.

Both secondary and primary sources of data were used. The secondary data involved through document analysis of enrolment trends in schools and performance profile. The major data collection instruments were questionnaires which were first pre-tested to determine their validity and reliability; and the interview guides. Primary data was collected using both questionnaires for teachers and interview guides for the students and school principals. Quantitative data from questionnaires was analyzed using descriptive statistics while qualitative data from interviews was analyzed using thematic approaches and reported in narrative and direct

quotes. The observation checklist was used to map out and corroborate the status of the learning environment in most schools to corroborate data collected from the various respondents.

## **RESEARCH FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION**

### **Challenges and Intervention Strategies of Inclusive Education at the National Level**

According to Republic of Kenya (2013), the school mapping data set, there are 3,464 special needs institutions (38.2 % ECDE, 3.4 % NFE, and 54.1 primary and 4.3 5 secondary) in the country with 2,713 integrated institutions and 734 special schools. Among these, there are 10 for learners with hearing impairments, 3 for learners with physical handicaps, and a total of 17 secondary schools for learners with disabilities in Kenya. These figures show that access and participation of children with special needs is relatively low across the country. Generally, access and participation of pupils with special needs is low their needs are not being specifically addressed, especially with children with behavioural difficulties and various forms of learning difficulties and attention deficit (Republic of Kenya, 2013). The emphasis on academic performance and examinations creates an unfavorable learning environment for children with special needs and even moderate learning difficulties. This poses a challenge to the integration and inclusion of children with such difficulties in regular schools.

Special needs education requires appropriate adaptations to curricular, teaching methods, educational resources, medium of communication and the learning environment in order to cater for individual differences in learning. Special needs education is important for human capital development as it prepares those who would otherwise be dependents to be self-reliant. Traditionally, special needs education has been provided in special schools, integrated schools and in special units attached to regular schools. Provision of educational services has been skewed towards four traditional categories- hearing impairments, visual impairments, mental retardation and physical handicap leaving out all other areas. Areas left out include learners with Autism, Gifted and Talented, Emotional and behavioral difficulties and special learning difficulties. More recently, provision has been extended to such children in regular schools through the policy of inclusivity (Republic of Kenya, 2013).

### **Challenges at the National Level**

The main challenges relating to access and equity in the provision of education and training to children with special needs include: cultural prejudices and negative attitudes, the reluctance to implement guidelines on the implementation of SNE policy and inclusivity, lack of data on the number of children with special needs, inadequate tools and skills for assessing and identifying learners with special needs.

According to the policy framework on education, in order to address these challenges, the Government of Kenya shall adopt and implement the following policies:

- Adopt and implement inclusive education.
- Integrate special educational institutions in all learning and training institutions and ensure that the institutions are responsive to the education of learners with special needs and disability.
- Intervention Strategies at the National Level.

Among the strategies to be adopted, according to Republic of Kenya (2013), include: adoption and implementation of inclusive education. It is envisaged that programmers will be designed and implemented that enhance inclusive education in all institutions. The second strategy is to implement affirmative action to enable gifted and talented, learners with special needs and disabilities to access secondary, tertiary and university education. Third, restructure Kenya Institute of Education (KISE) and enhance its capacity to enable it to play a more effective role in the training of teachers and other personnel working with learners with special needs and disabilities, including tailored courses for the headteachers and educational managers to support inclusive education. The other strategy is to establish pilot special schools, integrated programmers and inclusive education as centers of excellence at country level.

### **Challenges Facing Inclusive Education in the Study Locale**

Kenya begun by the formulation of policies to roll out the programme in all the public schools in the country and this has seen different schools embrace own ways of implementation through enrolment to class conditions as was noted in the study locale. However, there were several challenges facing school managers in their quest to respond to the government policy of embracing inclusive education.

One Headteacher interviewed he averred:

.....There has been shortage of resources which include classrooms, desks, textbooks such as talking books for the blind, Braille machines for the blind and classrooms constructed using rumps to facilitate the movements of students with physical disabilities such as the lame and failure to embrace the assistive technology as most schools still use outdated technology to do even office work, hence cannot afford computer based assistive technology for their students with special Educational needs such as large prints, on screen reading, compact discs, and also talking calculators.....

The foregoing quotation indicates that the inclusive schools in the study locale are constrained by a myriad of intertwined problems.

These problems were corroborated through observation which revealed that most basic instructional resources were in a sorry state as depicted in Figure 1 and Figure 2. Figure 1 which shows the state of toilets in a particular school indicates that tall trees and the surface around the facility do not portray a child-friendly environment for the physically or even visually challenged learners. It was evident that there were dilapidated structures used as classrooms which could not effectively cater for the physically challenged students. Figure 2, which shows the type of classrooms in some schools confirm the pathetic state of physical facilities in some of these schools meant for disabled learners. The poor construction strategies used by designers of some facilities in some schools which include the library, laboratory, classrooms and toilets did not portray a child-friendly learning environment in most schools in the district.

The conditions of selected physical facilities in some of the schools visited indicate a sorry state of these facilities. Clearly, this is against the Government prescription through the legal provisions and policies governing education in Kenya as spelt out in the schools management guide (Republic of Kenya, 2003) . The guides outline the number of sanitation facilities required in a school. According to this guide, sanitation facilities required should be in the following ratio 1: 30 for boys and 1: 25 for girls, a urinal pit for boys and at least one toilet for staff. The study carried out in the past found out that 5.6% of the schools that were involved in the study had been closed down due to lack of toilets.

The findings are however in line with those from a study in 2004 by Ngetha carried out in Ruiru Division which established 74% of the schools experienced a shortage of latrines. This is wrapped up by de Vreede (2003) who agrees that a severe shortage of toilets in many public schools is undermining the efforts to provide quality Education due to delays caused as students queued to visit toilets interfering with the school timetable.



**Figure 1: The state of toilet in a participating school**



**Figure 2: The condition of doors as entrance to classrooms**

The rugged entrances hinder students' movements such as the orthopedics. The teacher student ratio is another evident factor that hinders admission of students to schools as admission is done considering the availability of space in the already available classrooms. Students are so many in regular classrooms which hinder the teachers from giving individual attention especially to students with special needs. With problems experienced in admission as principals have to limit admission considering the amount of facilities available in schools. More challenges are met with students with special needs ranging from attendance as evaluated from the attendance register maintained by the class teachers, majority of these students rarely come to school. In relation to the above statement and the analysis of data on teachers also considering the stock of teachers, UNESCO (2005) notes that "stock should be built up into national aggregates by level where applicable such as the stock of teachers in each sector of the educational services compared with the desirable situation based on official staffing formulae"

This finding is in tandem with an earlier national study by UNESCO (2005) and Orodho (2014) which established that most secondary schools did not have adequate classrooms to accommodate the large numbers of pupils enrolled in primary as a result of free primary education and further transition to the secondary level. Getange, Onkeo and Orodho (2014) further suggested that part of the constituency development funds should be



used to put up classrooms and toilets or rehabilitate facilities in schools to provide students with an enabling learning environment. Principals would embrace assistive technology that is, the use of computers and other modern technologies to facilitate learning in the inclusive classrooms. Others include the use of talking calculators, talking books, screen reading and large prints on screen to assist both visually and hearing impaired students. Interviews with the Ministry of education officials, especially the

The Quality Assurance and Standards Officers (QASOs) in the field revealed that the ratio of qualified to unqualified teachers in schools in the study locale was pathetic. The stated that the percentage of teachers with requisite teaching in special needs education was only about 10 percent, with the rest being teachers with no skills to handle special needs education, especially the inclusive education model. Yet, for teaching and learning to be enhanced in inclusive classrooms, the teachers and students should be trained in certain skills like sign language for the hearing impaired and the school should be equipped also with the right infrastructural and instructional materials such as the right text books and buildings for each case of specialty.

According to one QASO officer interviewed, he averred:

Lack of teachers with these special skills who can facilitate communication within the classrooms for effective outcome make the efficiency in the provision of inclusive education in these schools unattainable in fact is a 'dream' the government in relation with the Ministry of Education is yet to unravel. As per the current situation from field analysis the system is inefficient.

Adding their voices to this debate, the interviewed students revealed that:

Inadequate learning resources, dilapidated facilities/structures and lack of special learning facilities are a major source of inefficient learning outcomes in these schools in relation to students with special educational need; lack adequate classrooms since the classrooms are already congested as a result of free secondary education ; mobility problems as a result of lack of facilities to spur their movement , lacked basic learning facilities and assistive infrastructure such wheel chairs for orthopedically impaired.

The foregoing citation implies that the learning conditions in most of the special needs schools or schools that have embraced inclusive education were in pathetic condition and as a result not learner friendly. Yet, learner friendly schools have been stressed by the current education policies (Republic of Kenya, 2012b). These results are in conflict with the expectations of Chesswas, (1969) who states that, "it is generally accepted that pupils need books, furniture and buildings and strategies should be employed to provide them as teachers are employed to these schools.

Parents too are not free to take their children with special educational needs to school as they view disabilities as curse as their tradition puts it. This negative attitude by the parents is contributing considerably to the inability of schools to get enough learners who are motivated right from home to learn. The Government has not taken inclusive education seriously as no funds are availed for its implementation. All these weighs down the efficiency in the provision of inclusive education in secondary schools as even parents are ignorant of such programmes in schools hence fail to support the schools.

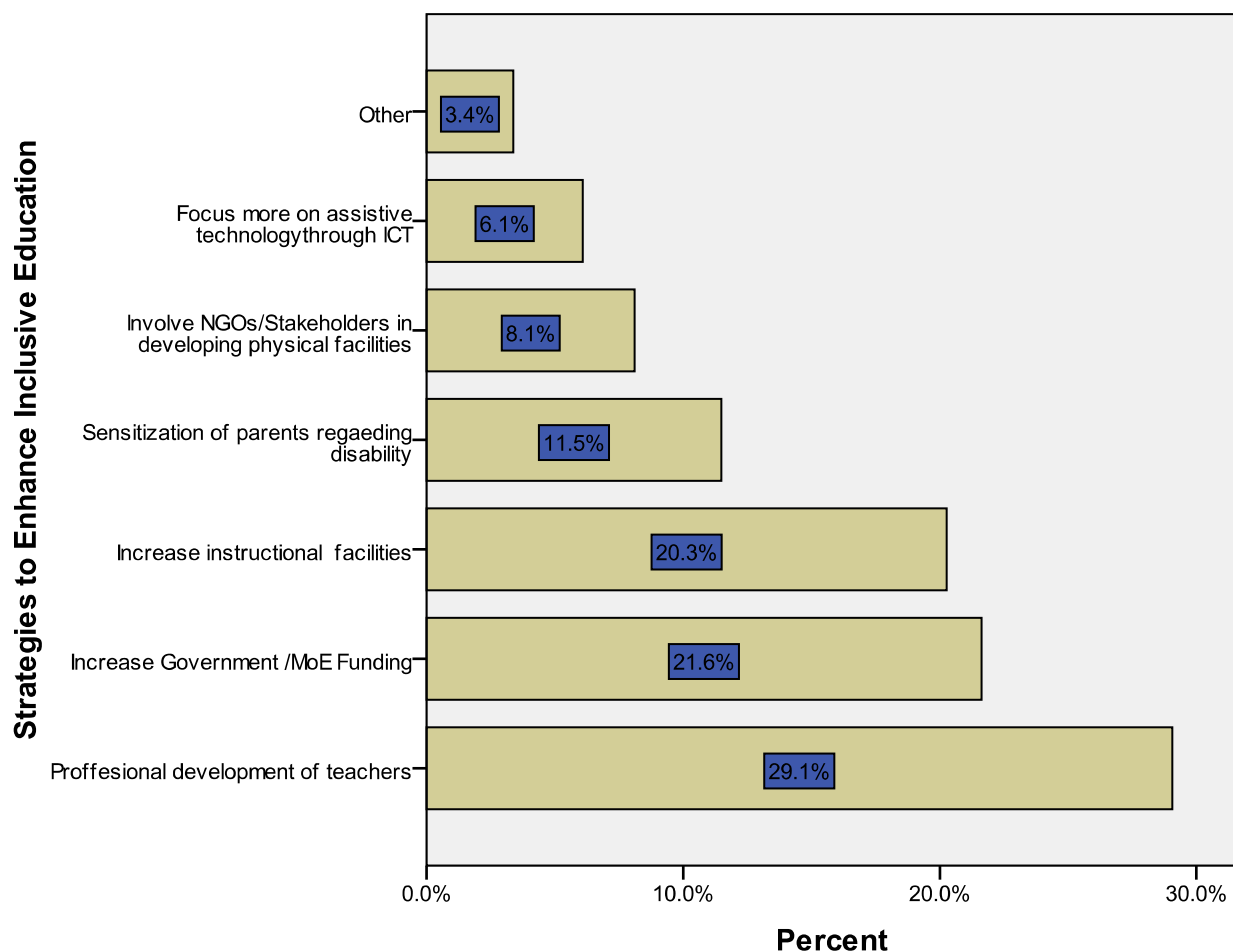
### **Intervention strategies to be adopted to cope with the Challenges**

Figure 3 indicates the suggested strategies to be considered in coping with the challenges inhibiting effective implementation of inclusive education in Rongo District, Migori County. From the results in the figure, it is evident that several approaches that include the participation of the Government of Kenya through the Ministry of Education, individual school initiatives, participation by the Non Governmental as well as Philanthropic Organizations and parental involvement emerged.

The first highly rated strategy which was cited nearly one third of respondents was the professional development of teachers teaching in inclusive institutions. This suggestion is in line with the Government of Kenya that unequivocally state that human capital is one of the most critical resources needed for socio-economic development of an organization such as a school or nation (Republic of Kenya, 2012). Therefore, a critical mass of educated people who are equipped with appropriate knowledge, skills and attitudes is required in order to achieve the country's political, economic and social goals that are articulated in Kenya Vision 2030, and by

extension in educational institutions. The Government agrees that major issues exist in turning the MoE into learning organization with skilled and motivated personnel. One such area that experiences shortages is the teaching force despite the fact that the Government commits over one third of the national cake to education to largely met teachers' salaries (Republic of Kenya, 2012; Sylvia & Orodho, 2014). The Government of Kenya adds that these challenges relate to not having prioritized funding for Human Resource Development (HRD), a failure to develop a clearly articulated institutional staff development plan, and more specifically for being slow to address staffing and equipment needs. These problems are extremely hurting the development of inclusive education in Kenya.

The second strategy, cited by 21.6 percent of the respondents, which should be considered especially by the Government through the Ministry of Education, is the increase of funding to education, especially in the area of special education. It was revealed that the learning facilities in special needs education were extremely expensive and the Government ought to devise a differentiated mode of funding education.



**Figure 3 : Suggested strategies to cope with challenges in inclusive Education**

The third highly rated strategy suggested by 20.3 percent of all the respondents was the need to increase instructional facilities in the inclusive schools. The government should aid schools to put up the right infrastructure and instructional materials for special educational needs through the provision of funds allocated specifically for special needs education'

The fourth strategy, cited by slightly over 10 percent of the respondents was the need to sensitize parents with children with disability to develop positive attitudes towards them. Parents should be sensitized on the importance of taking these children to school and not view it as a curse having a disabled child. According to

Sheba and Sacher, (2003), this kind of grouping results in the learners with SNE being segregated from other pupils of their age. This cannot only be stigmatizing but also restricts access to important educational opportunities. The metaphor of a journey, as per the views of McLaughlin and Warren (2003) was to be supported by Smith (2004), who further stated that it is a process of change.

Finally, the other strategies cited by 8.1 % and 6.1 % of the respondents were the need to involve the Non-Governmental Organizations in the development of physical facilities and the need to specifically on the development of assistive technology through Information and Communication Technology (ICT), respectively. This finding is in line with earlier study that indicated that educational facilities and materials are critical requirements for the success of any educational undertaking. These include the very basic ones such as books, seats and classrooms, playgrounds among others (Orodho, 2014). Well-wishers, development partners and churches to assist the government to ensure that these children get the required education through such provisions as funds for purchasing their special facilities or and donate the facilities to schools by themselves. Students with special needs should therefore be supplied with the assistive technology that will enhance their learning to make them benefit equally as they are integrated in the regular classrooms. These may include; Braille, large prints, talking books, screen readers, video enlargers, electronic texts. Through this, inequalities in participation in the classrooms is reduced and all students benefit equally from lessons taught and personal readings.

This is in line with Smith (2004), who talks of accommodations or instructional adaptations being either typical/routine, that is, strategies directed towards the whole class, or relatively minor adaptations that a teacher makes for any student, or substantial/specialized instructional adaptations, which are individually tailored adjustments to suit the needs of an individual with SNE. According to Tilstone, Florian and Rose (2005), skilled support is very important especially in ensuring that there is balancing of the structured intervention to facilitate broader interaction within the integrated class/group. Reiterating the fact that training and professional supervision are increasingly important for both the teaching as well as the non-teaching staff, Tilstone et al., (2005) argue that pupils in integrated settings must be provided with skilled support so that interactions can be promoted and facilitated throughout the range of activities

## CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This gist of this study was to examine the constraints hindering effective provision of inclusive education and strategies being employed to cope with these bottlenecks. From the findings and discussions, it was concluded that the education stakeholders such as parents, students, teachers, DEO are facing a myriad of intertwined challenges in the process of implementing inclusive education in secondary schools in Rongo District, Migori County, Kenya.

First, in relation to enrolment trends of students with special educational needs in regular schools, it was concluded that very few students, averaging about 5 seek admission to school. This number is less than the number available for such purpose.

Secondly, it is concluded that parents considerably contribute to low enrolment of students in inclusive educational institutions in the study locale. It was established that some parents actually hide their children with disabilities at home for fear of being ridiculed and termed as people with curses. Some African traditional perceive giving birth to a disabled child as a curse and hence punishment as a result of previous wrong doing by the family. This shows how the community has also neglected its role in education and left every responsibility in the hands of the government.

Third, inadequate financial allocations by the government for procurement of special facilities to facilitate learning in inclusive classrooms lead to high dropout rates and low graduation rates. This was considered to be hindering the efficiency in the provision of inclusive education since personnel and facilities were not availed to facilitate the teaching and learning process. These problems have hindered even the attainment of education for all goals as some always advise some cases of specialties to get admission in special unit schools which most parents cannot afford due to poverty while other students rely on their students colleagues support during learning process.

Fourth, it is concluded that the principals and teachers face great problems in the process of implementing inclusive education because some of them do not even understand the concept of inclusive education. As a result, they tend to implement it unknowingly when they admit students with autism, partial blindness, physically impaired and mentally handicapped.

Fifth, teachers have not been trained to handle inclusive classrooms which contain the hearing impaired since they are not trained in sign language and the blind since they have no training in Braille machines or any other assistive technology in line with special educational needs. The building designs do not allow for free mobility of students with special educational needs especially the orthopedically impaired.

Based on the findings and conclusions made thus far, the following recommendations are made to enhance the provision of inclusive education:

1. The community which includes parents should be sensitized on their role in ensuring success of inclusive education. Parents should be made to understand and appreciate the fact that giving birth to a disabled child is not a curse. Hence, they should be counseled to appreciate the fact and be assisted to expose these children to all the opportunities available in the country in education in order to maximize their potentialities.
2. There is need for all secondary school teachers to be exposed to consistent staff development programmes. For instance, they should receive in-service training in special educational needs and for those joining the fresh training, a common unit should be designed on special educational needs especially on sign language and Braille machines as well as reading of Braille text books to equip them with appropriate skills in readiness for integrated classrooms.
3. The Government of Kenya through the Ministry of Education (MoE) should allocate funds to schools to help in procuring special facilities for special needs education such as talking books, talking calculators, Braille machines and computers for ICT in education. The government should also increase fund allocations to schools especially those from regions without adequate resources. The Constituency Development Fund (CDF) should be increased and channeled to public schools regularly and on time to assist in school development projects such as building of properly designed classrooms and toilets for learners with various challenges.
4. Policy the Government of Kenya, through the Ministry of Education should ensure that the guidelines on inclusive education are reformulated more realistically and implemented to the letter. No deserving learner with disability should be denied admission to the inclusive education on grounds that there are inadequate and inappropriate facilities to cater for their inclusion. Thus, for efficiency to be realized in the provision of inclusive education, the government should enforce workable policies through enforcement of pragmatic and appropriate implementation strategies.

Finally, the parting shot is that the success of the inclusive education will largely depend on aggressive sensitization campaigns to enable all stakeholders in education understand their roles in the provision of inclusive education and this will debunk the idea that the government is the only body that should take full responsibility over inclusive education not only in the study locale of Rongo District, Migori County, but also in other counties experiencing similar constraints in the entire Republic of Kenya.

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