

Primary School Teachers' Dilemma of Inclusive Education in Kenya: Between Principle and Practice

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This paper investigates how well teachers understand Kenya's policy of inclusive education and explores the dilemma they face between the principle and practice. Previous studies have shown that teachers are the key for the implementation of inclusive education. While the Kenyan government shows her commitment to inclusive education, the extent of her support for teachers on the ground are not well known. The study was conducted in Nairobi and Marsabit in 2016/17 for a total of four weeks. The study utilizes data collected from 20 schools using questionnaires administered for 200 teachers, semi-structured interviews with 20 head/deputy teachers and one focus group discussion with six teachers. In addition, the study interviewed officials in each county. The findings have revealed that teachers do not fully understand the policy of inclusive education due to the lack of adequate training opportunities. Furthermore, teachers express the dilemma between the principle and the practice of implementing inclusive education. While the government has enacted the policy of inclusive education, it has created a dilemma for schools regarding whether to continue admitting children with disabilities because it is their right or to resist due to inadequate school environment, including teachers' capacity. This paper recommends a deeper reflection on the operationalization of the policy of inclusive education, particularly regarding community sensitization, teacher training and school funding.