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A critical analysis on the impact of differentiated instructions on skills acquisition for learners with special needs in Kenya

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Abstract

Educating learners with special needs has not been easy and has become a challenge in Kenya. Skills acquisition is the ability to be trained in a particular task or function and become expert in it. Despite the government efforts in promoting special needs education there are a number of challenges yet to be unraveled on skills acquisition by learners with special needs. The fact that Learners with special need grow up and become older before they complete primary education has made it hard for the education department to come up with criteria in handling this situation. The special need students spend most of time being catered by their parents who are afraid to let the teachers bear the burden too earlier. A lot has been tried in Kenya to reduce ignorance and poverty among its population which has been a major hindrance to primary school education for the special needs. Primary school education which plays a key role in the national development process has become a key element. The researcher employed a combination of research design in his work; this is because the researcher aim was the recommendations on what should be done to acquiring skills acquisition for learners. The purpose of the study was critically analyze the impact of differentiated instructions learners' acquisition in primary schools in Kenya. The review was done in relation to schools policies, practices and procedures that hinder and interrupt programmes in educating students with special needs.

Keywords: Learners with Special Needs, Skills Acquisition, Differentiated Instruction

1. Introduction

Skills acquisition is the ability to be trained in a particular task or function and become expert in it. Education policy should be reviewed to eliminate the obstacle related to provision of equity and good quality education to challenged children in schools. Life skills tools and reliable information should be made available in classes; special assessment and good curriculum not tailored are the most challenging factors and they should be faced to meet the special needs.

It is clearly known that people are different and the environment one is exposed to during the growth contributes to individual characteristics that vary from one person to another, hence during reacquiring various attentions. To meet the needs of each individual has become a challenge and this has for years left individual learners unattended to satisfaction. Education performance of learners with diversified abilities has not been maximally attained. There is need to research more and come out with strategies comprising of curriculum, personnel, facilities and adjustment of environment to make it easy for skills acquisition for the learners with special needs.

The policies initiated by the government of Kenya to enhance universal primary education, when over universal primary education were limited to few countries. Even though free education initiation enhanced enrolment, a number of challenges are realized in the process of stagnation test scores and achievement gaps due to skills acquisitions towards teachers to the special needs students.

2. Statement of the problem

Despite the government efforts in promoting special needs education there are a number of challenges yet to be unraveled on skills acquisition by learners with special needs. Differentiated instructions have not been fully effective to enable easy acquisition of skills to

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all learners. Problems emanating from lack of infrastructure, lack of skilled teachers to handle special needs, rigid curriculum teachers finding it difficult to use differentiated instruction, among others may be a barrier to effective skills attainment for pupils with special needs.

3. Purpose of study

To critically analyze the impact of using differentiated instruction for skills acquisition for learners with special needs. The study was aimed at critically identifying the effects and influences for use of differentiated instruction to acquisitions of skills. The analysis was guided to come out with strategies to be used for efficiency in skills attainment for pupils with special needs.

4. Research objectives

1. To critically establish the impacts on time allocation on skills acquisition for learners with special needs in Kenya.
2. To critically establish the impacts of assessing students on skills acquisition for learners with special needs in Kenya.
3. To critically establish the impacts of learning and teaching methods on skills acquisition for learners with special needs in Kenya.
4. To critically analyze the impacts of learning materials used by teachers on skills acquisition for learners with special needs in Kenya.
5. To critically analyze on the impact of trained teachers flexibility on skills acquisition for learners with special needs in Kenya.

5. Research questions

1. What are the effects of time allocation on skills acquisition for learners with special needs in Kenya?
2. What are the impacts of assessing students for syllabus content knowledge on skills acquisition for learners with special needs in Kenya?
3. What are the impacts of learning and teaching movement and flow on skills acquisition for learners with special needs in Kenya?
4. How do the learning materials used by teacher's impact on skills acquisition for learners with special needs in Kenya?
5. What are the impacts of trained teachers on acquisition of skills for learners with special needs in Kenya?

6. Research Methodology

The researchers employed a qualitative research design in his work. This is because the researchers aim at receiving information from the already existing literature.

7. Literature Review

With introduction of free basic education by the government had made the public schools enrolment increase in some places. The inadequate facilities have become a challenge due to a large number of children going to school. It is from this signature that there is need for improvement in facilities that include administrative and personnel structure to meet the forthcoming demand, especially the disabled and the disadvantaged children. Teachers equipped with relative skills of handling children with disabilities are of paramount importance. Provision of facilities, trained personnel and in

servicing school administrators will improve access of education by all children.

7.1 Time allocation on skills acquisition

Additional passive time does not hurt and sometimes helps with skill development. Schooling helps develop cognitive skills, but has different effects on non-cognitive skills according to child age. Additional time in school helps older children develop non-cognitive skills, but inhibits the development of non-cognitive skills for younger children. An increase in sleep helps non cognitive skills for younger children, but does not matter for older children. Finally, the overall impacts of time inputs are smaller for younger children than for older children.

Our aim in this paper is to estimate the impact of time allocation on skills acquisition for learners with special needs. To do this, we exploit a recently developed test of exogeneity that provides an objective statistical criterion to determine whether the parameters of interest can be interpreted as causal. We use the test to guide us in the search for causal models without an explicit source of quasi-experimental variation. Our empirical approach is essentially a model selection one, but with a key difference from existing approaches: our criterion to select models speaks directly to causality, not to fit. In the context of skill development, model selection occurs in a very large model space; indeed, there are many ex ante equally plausible ways of formulating the relationship between time inputs and skill. We show that a multivariate version of the exogeneity test in this context is a feasible tool to substantially reduce the set of models that can plausibly be considered appropriate to make causal inference.

7.2 Impacts of assessing students on skills acquisition

Special needs learners are viewed by as those having significant difficulties in coping with children of the same age, they could be referred to as the hearing impaired, emotionally disabled, blindness, deafness, hardness-of-hearing, mental retardation, limb deformity, maladjustment, partial-sightedness or malformation. Special needs learners are categorized as sets of people who may not benefit fully from the regular or formal education obtainable in primary, secondary and tertiary institutions. They are people (learners) who are described as disabled, impaired, or handicap to a certain extent and as such they cannot benefit maximally in the regular educational setting. Their exceptionality might have resulted from misfortune experienced before or after birth.

The word disability, impairment and handicap are interchangeably used to refer to people with special needs; however these terms are not identical. For example impairment according to is bodily illnesses, defect, abnormality or dysfunction, injury, defectiveness, deviation and any other shortcoming of the several structures affecting the organs of the body. Disability according to is the ability limitation or ability loss in taking part of normal life in the community due to physical and social barriers. Handicap happens once disability affects with the usual working of a person. Handicap refers to problems that place limitation on the peoples capabilities expected from them in the society.

7.3 Impacts of learning and teaching methods

Academic achievement for the learners with learning incapacities needs an attention on individual learning and teaching, individual progress, and individual learning. This

needs exact, focused, personalized, rigorous corrective teaching for pupils who are struggling.

Whether the pupil is in the overall education classroom or learning in a special class setting, focus the activities on assessing separate pupils to display their development through the program. Individual concerns take superiority over fears for the group or the curriculum or for the group and organization of the overall education classroom content.

7.4 Impacts of learning materials used by teachers on skills acquisition

Learning materials are used by teachers to make the content of what is to be taught more pragmatic and interesting to learners. notes that learning materials vary from inexpensive and simple eg flat pictures, chalk boards, diagrams, counters and wall charts to expensive ones like projectors, computers and slides. Teaching and learning resources are vital to any successful teaching and learning process worldwide. This is because these resources aid the teacher to effectively transfer the content to the learners. The teaching and learning materials assist children in holistic learning. noted that children are very active when exposed to various teaching and learning resources. notes that teaching materials makes teaching to become easier.

7.5 Impact of trained teacher's flexibility

Teaching for learners with disabilities is not well developed in the education system of Kenya. In improving inclusive education, it seems that there is a need to prepare a good ground for training more teachers in the field of Special Needs Education as a means to resolve the problem. Also there is a need of Curriculum shift from traditional teaching and assessment model which is now prevailing, to the teaching and assessment model where its purpose is neither to transfer knowledge, give marks nor to place learners in segregated environments. This is opposite in comparison to traditional teaching and assessment model where its objectives is to transfer knowledge, measure and give marks in comparisons with other learners in the classroom, school, and at regional or national level.

Many education centers in Kenya have fewer teachers. The state is worse in the centers which practice inclusion to learners with disabilities. These schools had shortage of trained teachers in the field of Special Needs Education. Shortage of professionals, special needs educators, as well as lack of teaching facilities and learning devices for the learners with disabilities are also the problems which draws back the efforts in providing good education to the learners with disabilities. In many schools the ratio of teacher: learner is very discouraging. The number of learners per class is big as a result teachers faced with many difficulties during facilitation. The government policy still emphasizes to increase the training of regular teachers rather than teachers in Special needs education. Teachers who teach in inclusive classroom for learners with disabilities are still faced with many challenges. The act of managing to teach and involving learners with disabilities to participate and interacts with the teacher, and interacts among learners themselves during learning in their classrooms had been seen to be one of the challenge which faced many teachers.

8. Recommendations

The researchers recommend the following:

1. Adequate time allocation to teachers who are acquiring skills.

2. Proper syllabus content in school curriculum.
3. learning and teaching methods improved to accommodate skills.
4. Learning and teaching materials.
5. Train more teachers.

9. Conclusion

Education performance of learners with diversified abilities has not been maximally attained. There is need to research more and come out with strategies comprising of curriculum, personnel, facilities and adjustment of environment to make it easy for skills acquisition for the learners with special needs. The policies initiated by the government of Kenya to enhance universal primary education, when over universal primary education were limited to few countries. Even though free education initiation enhanced enrolment, a number of challenges are realized in the process of stagnation test scores and achievement gaps due to skills acquisitions towards teachers to the special needs students.

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