

Abstract

The study was carried out in Special Needs Units (SNUs) in inclusive schools in Kitui - West sub county, Kenya. The study sought to establish the role of physical environment in the implementation of Special Needs Education (SNE) curriculum in public primary schools. The study was guided by Input - Output Process Theory developed by McDonwell and Oakes in 1987. The census sampling method was used to get participants who provided the required data in respect to objectives of the study whereby all the 30 special needs education teachers in the 12 special needs units were targeted. Three sets of instruments were used to collect data. These included the interview guide, checklist and observation schedule. Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) version 20 was used to analyze data. Descriptive statistics were used to analyze quantitative data through use of frequencies, percentages and means. Pie charts, tables and figures were used to present analyzed data while qualitative data was organized into themes based on the study objectives and presented in narrative form. Findings from the study revealed that most of the schools' physical environments lacked structures necessary for conducive SNE learning, with very little or no modifications made to make them barrier free and learner friendly. The study concluded that there is a significant relationship between factors of the school physical environment and leaner performance and achievement in school. The study recommended creation of school physical environments that are barrier free, stimulative, enjoyable and meaningful to learning, and a review and full implementation of all laws, policies and regulations on disability such as the Education Act with the aim of making least restrictive environments in all learning institutions.