

ABSTRACT

Education for All (EFA) is the current call by the government to ensure that all members of the society access education without discrimination regardless of their special needs. According to UNESCO schools should accommodate all children regardless of their disabilities. However, learners with special needs in education often dropout of school more as compared to those without special needs, particularly in Mbooni East Sub County. The report from the district education office in Mbooni East Sub County indicates that between the years 2011-2015, the school dropout of learners with special needs has stood between (33-53%) while the dropout in Mwala Sub County was between (26-35%). The difference in the two neighboring sub counties is yet to be known. The purpose of the study was to find out the determinants of school dropout of learners with special needs in regular primary schools in Mbooni East Sub County, Makueni County, Kenya. The objectives of this study were to: determine the role of school environment on dropout of learners with special needs in regular primary schools in Mbooni East Sub county, establish the role of curriculum on the dropout of learners with special needs in regular primary schools in Mbooni East Sub county, Establish the role of the use of support services on the drop out of learners with special needs in regular primary schools and determine the role of the use of assistive devices on the dropout of learners with special needs in regular primary schools . The study was guided by a conceptual framework showing the determinants and how they affect the drop out of learners with special needs in regular primary schools. . Descriptive research survey design was used in the study. The study population consisted of 40 head teachers, 352 teachers and 208 learners with special needs. Saturated sampling was used to select 36 head teachers, simple random sampling was used to select 105 teachers and 84 learners with special needs. The instruments for data collection were questionnaires, interview schedule and observation schedule. A pilot study was carried out using 10% of the population to determine reliability of the instruments. Using test-retest method a coefficient correlation of 0.79 for teachers and 0.81 for head teachers were realized which were accepted. Experts from the department of special needs education in Maseno University ascertained face and content validity of the instruments. Quantitative data was presented using descriptive statistical methods (means and percentages). Qualitative data collected from interview and observation schedules was put into various categories and reported in as themes and sub themes. The finding of the study revealed that, school environment was the leading cause of school dropout of learners with special needs (mean=4.18), followed by support services (mean=4.09), curriculum differentiation (mean4.00) and assistive devices was ranked the last cause (mean=3.98) in Mbooni east Sub County. The findings of this study will be significant to curriculum developers and implementers, the ministry of Education, Educational Assessment and Resource Centre, assessor and examiners to ensure that the learners with special needs access quality and relevant education in a least restrictive environment.