A Dissertation Submitted in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the
Concentration of the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy in Leadership and Education

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The Improvement of Inclusive Education in Public Primary Schools through the Collaboration of Head Teachers-Parent-Teacher Collaboration for Effectiveness of
ABSTRACT

Head teacher-parent collaboration plays a crucial role in the improvement of inclusive education. The study was set to analyse the effectiveness of the head teacher-parent collaboration for the improvement of inclusive education in public primary schools, in Meru County, Kenya. The objectives of the study were: to analyse the use of head teacher-parent collaboration context for the improvement of inclusive education; to examine the efficiency of the nature of head teacher-parent collaboration for the improvement of inclusive education and to explore the value of head teacher-parent collaboration inputs for the improvement of inclusive education. The study was guided by Bronfenbrenner’s bio-ecological systems theory and Peters’ input-process-outcome-context framework of Inclusive Education. The study used mixed research approach methods. Descriptive survey and phenomenology research designs, under quantitative and qualitative research approach methods respectively, were used. Qualitative research approach method was predominantly used. The target population was 101,612 (772 head teachers, 6,840 teachers and 94,000 parents). Out of the target population, there was a unique target population of 218 (77 head teachers, 68 teachers and 73 parents) who were actively involved in inclusive education in 77 inclusive public primary schools in Meru County. Through purposive and proportionate stratified random sampling, a number of eight (8) regular public primary schools and a sample size of 24 participants were selected from the unique target population. The study instruments used included: questionnaires, interview schedules, focus group discussion guide, observations and documents' analysis schedules. The tools were piloted for reliability and validity in Isiolo County, Kenya. Data was collected by the researcher through meeting with the participants face-to-face, which ensured whole response return rates. Quantitative data was analysed with the assistance of Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) version 20, while qualitative data analysis was done with the help of computer package, ATLAS. ti. The study findings were presented using descriptive statistics and narratives within themes generated from the collected data. The findings indicated that head teacher-parent collaboration context (policies, leadership and its structure) enhanced the improvement of inclusive education. Most of the schools used informal policies. The nature (teamwork, communication and cooperation) of head teacher-parent collaboration was inadequate and ineffective for the improvement of inclusive education. Head teacher-parent collaboration inputs (resources and strategies) were useful but inadequate for the improvement of inclusive education. Head teacher-parent collaboration facilitated the improvement of inclusive education in a remote and insincere manner. Head teacher-parent collaboration made dismal improvement in inclusive education. It was concluded that, head teacher-parent collaboration is crucial to the improvement of all schools. It was recommended that the Ministry of Education should formulate appropriate inclusive education policies. All schools should practice democratic leadership and ensure that teamwork, communication and cooperation improve in schools. The government and all education stakeholders should provide more resources to improve the effectiveness of head teacher-parent collaboration for the improvement of inclusive education. The Teachers Service Commission should appoint head teachers who are positive about inclusive education and with the ability to work together with all parents to improve inclusive education.