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INFLUENCE OF CAPACITY BUILDING OF ACADEMIC TEACHING STAFF IN MAINSTREAMING DISABILITY INTERVENTIONS FOR STUDENTS WITH SPECIAL NEEDS IN PUBLIC UNIVERSITIES IN KENYA

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ABSTRACT

This study focused on academic teaching staff effectiveness in mainstreaming disability interventions for students with special needs in public universities in Kenya; a case of the University of Nairobi. University of Nairobi (UoN), like most public universities, has a disability mainstreaming policy, as a requirement and a performance indicator of the Government of Kenya, in accordance with Kenya's Persons with Disability Act (2003) and UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (2007), where all Government institutions are required to mainstream disability in their functions and operations. Thus, the university, UoN admits students with varying special needs. This study aimed at investigating how the academic teaching staff has been sensitized and in-serviced in knowledge, skills, and attitudes that can enable them to interact effectively with students living with disabilities in the teaching- learning process. The question is, how many of the professionally trained teaching staff is acquainted with skills, and knowledge of handling and interacting with students living with different types of disability in public universities? The objectives of the study focused on examining the awareness level of academic staff on disability policy interventions, teaching strategies applied by academic teaching staff, utilization of resources and assessment procedures in lessons where there were students with disabilities. The findings of this study were meant to inform university disability policy and practice, identify gaps in the implementation of disability interventions for students with disability and identify further opportunities and practice in-servicing of academic teaching staff in knowledge, skills, and attitudes in handling students living with different disabilities. A case study design was employed, and the study targeted undergraduate and postgraduate students with disabilities. The questionnaire, interview schedule, focus group discussions, observation, and document analysis guide were key tools for data collection. A sample size of 250 academic staff members and 800 students was drawn from the target population of 68,000 students, 2,500 academic staff, and 5,400 administrative and technical staff respectively. Stratified random sampling was employed where students were divided into two strata; those with a disability and those without a disability. All those with a disability were purposively selected for the study and those without a disability a 50% rule was applied.

KEYWORDS: *Academic Teaching Staff, Capacity Building, Disability, Mainstreaming, Interventions*

INTRODUCTION

Background of the Study

In June 1994 representatives of 92 governments and 25 international organizations formed the World Conference on Special Needs Education (WCSNE), held in Salamanca, Spain. They agreed on a dynamic new Statement on the education for all disabled children, which called for inclusion to be the norm. In addition, the conference adopted a new Framework for Action, whose guiding principle is that ordinary schools should accommodate all children, regardless of their physical, intellectual, social, emotional, linguistic or other conditions (Salamanca Statement, 1994). Since then, inclusive education has become an influential global trend, where capacities are being developed to achieve it at all levels of education. Although implementation of inclusive education has taken root in countries such as United States of America, Australia, Britain; African and Asian continents still lag far much behind in implementing it, may be due to cultural hindrances, stereotyping and attitudes surrounding all those with disabilities.

All educational institutions provide education as a right to all as per the United Nations Declaration of Human Rights (1948), hence disability as a condition cannot be overlooked. The stereotyping of learners with different forms of disability has led to stigmatization and discrimination of students with different forms of disabilities in educational institutions. People with Disabilities (PWDs) are such a great workforce that can contribute a great deal to economic development if their potentialities, abilities, talents, skills, knowledge, interests and attitudes are developed, nurtured and empowered. All those students with disabilities need to have access to education and training to make them compete effectively in employment opportunities and be useful members of the society. Thus, all institutions need to promote inclusiveness in all strategies of resource development and capacity building for its teaching staff. Global organizations have taken the initiative to develop capacities in mainstreaming disability interventions in development. For instance, the United Nations Economic Council resolved in their consultative meeting of June 2014 to promote the rights of persons with disabilities and mainstream disability in the post 2015 development agenda; basing on recommendations and outcomes of earlier operational frameworks such as World Summit for Social Development in 1995 and 2000; Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, adopted in 2006; World Programme of Action concerning Disabled Persons; and Standard Rules on Equalization of Opportunities for Persons with Disabilities. UN's education agency – UNESCO (1994) called on the international community to endorse the approach of inclusive schools by implementing practical and strategic changes. World Conference called onall governments to give the 'highest policy and budgetary priority' to improve education services so that all children could be included, regardless ofall differences or difficulties; and to 'adopt as a matter of law or policy the principle of inclusive education' and enroll all children in ordinary schools.

Contextualization of Statement of the Problem

The study anchored on the influence of the capacity building on academic teaching staff in mainstreaming disability policy interventions at the University of Nairobi. Among the major trends in the global, regional and national community that universities seem to be slow to embrace yet it is taking its toll on university student learning achievements

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is inclusion and inclusive education. Universities are coming up with policies on mainstreaming disability interventions, in embracing inclusive education, yet implementation of these policy strategies seems to be the issue. In the implementation of inclusive education in universities, there is the challenge of inaccurate placement records and data on disabled students in learning institutions. According to ILO (2017), there is very little or no accurate data currently on people with disabilities worldwide including Kenya. World Health Organization's principle of ten percent of the population gives 4 million of the 40 million Kenyans as being disabled people; in Kenya, it is estimated that 4.6 percent constitute people with disabilities in their different categories of disabilities. In the whole world of six billion people, six hundred million people experience one form of disability or another. For university student and staff population, there are only general placement records for all students with no accurate record on students with a disability. The Kenya National Bureau of Statistics in the Statistical Abstract of 2017, Kenya Economic Report Survey (2017), Student Information Handbook (2017), among others, have student records as per the faculty and year of admission, with no data on the number of students with disabilities. What baseline survey data do the universities use to plan and execute on concerns of capacities in terms of human resources, physical and material resources when dealing with disability and implementation of inclusive education? What strategies and mechanisms have universities put in place to embrace inclusive education? What interventions need to be prioritized in mainstreaming processes? How has the university academic teaching staff been sensitized on the mainstreaming of these interventions?

According to Hurst (1996) participation of disabled students in higher education is an issue both of equal opportunities and of empowerment for the students concerned. When disabled people enter higher education they are taking up an opportunity to increase their knowledge, to develop their social skills, to obtain good quality education and to expose themselves to debate and discussion. It is an important experience for empowerment; yet little is known about disabled students' experience in higher education. For effective interaction with disabled students for their learning, achievement, and empowerment into the labor market; there is a need for a professionally trained or in a serviced teaching force that is well sensitized on mainstreaming of disability interventions, and, adequate material and physical institutionalized resources to cater for various types of disabilities.

Any reform in the education sector at all levels can only be achieved through the full measure of teacher involvement and commitment as the teacher is at the heart of the implementation process (Imonje, 2011). This is due to the fact that teacher resource is one of the most important inputs for quality learning outcomes (the Republic of Kenya, 2005; Swan wick, 2010), especially in the changing trend to inclusive education. Teacher level of preparation, skill, and attitude are critical variables for the success of inclusive practice (Benter, 1985; Eckes and Ochoa, 2005)

Statistics released by the Commission for University Education (CUE), show that the number of professors rose from 238 in 2010 to 265 by February 2013. This pushed academic teaching staff numbers in the seven oldest universities (University of Nairobi, Moi University, Kenyatta University, Egerton University, Jomo Kenyatta University of Agriculture and Technology, Maseno University, Masinde Muliro University of Science and Technology) to 5,189 from around 4,800 in 2008– 8% growth. The lecturer to student ratio varies between universities. The University of Nairobi, with 57,162 students, has an academic staff of 1,610 – meaning the lecturer to student ratio is 1:36 in normal course specializations. Student numbers shot from 140,000 in 2010 to 218,832 in the year 2013, which means that lecturers are forced to take on a bigger workload, hence, compromising the quality of learning. Although the number of qualified lecturers has been rising, it lags far behind student growth, forcing many universities to hire under-qualified staff in the position of tutorial fellows

for academic positions (Ng'ang'a, 2014). Furthermore, universities seem to have very few or none at all of the academic teaching staff who can interact effectively at the instructional level with students with disabilities.

There is an increasing number of students with disabilities from high school getting placement into the public universities for quality education. For instance, in the Kenya Certificate of Secondary School Examination (KCSE) results and analysis, of the year 2014; 483,630 candidates sat the examination, 149,717 candidates scored grade C+ and above (which is the minimum university entry). There is 1,090 Special Needs Education (SNE) students who sat for KCSE 2014. Out of the total, 180 candidates managed to obtained grade C+ and above, with 5 SNE candidates getting grade A Plain and 14 candidates getting grade A. Most of the 149,717 candidates including the 180 candidates of special needs, who got grade C+ and above will find placement into the public universities for further education. Hence, if the universities are slow in embracing academic teaching staff continuous professional development gap in mainstreaming disability policy interventions through inclusion efforts, education provided will be discriminative thus violating the right to quality education for all learners.

Objectives of the Study

The study objectives included: to establish the awareness level of the academic teaching staff in mainstreaming disability policy interventions ; to examine the resource strategies put in place by public universities to enable the academic teaching staff to teach students with special needs; to determine the teaching strategies applied by the academic teaching staff in interacting with students with special needs; to analyze how the academic teaching staff utilizes resources in the teaching/learning resources for students with special needs; to examine assessment strategies used by academic teaching staff for to test learning progress of students with special needs.

Contextual Analysis of Inclusive Education to Students with Disability

The concept of inclusion means total participation and involvement of all students with different forms of disability in the mainstream classrooms regardless of their physical, mental, emotional, psychological and cultural state. Inclusion is not placing students with a disability "paired" up with their counterpart peers next to them as interpreters or use of "assistive devices". UNESCO's (1994) definition as derived from the 1994 Salamanca Conference refers to inclusion a "process of addressing and responding to the diversity of needs of all learners through increasing participation in learning, cultures, and communities, and reducing exclusion within and from education. It involves changes and modifications in content, approaches, structures, and strategies, with a common vision which covers all children of the appropriate age range and a conviction that it is the responsibility of the regular system to educate all children". Stubbs (2008) defines inclusive education as "a wide range of strategies, activities, and processes that seek to make a reality of the universal right to quality, relevant and appropriate education to all. It seeks to enable communities, systems, and structures to combat discrimination, celebrate diversity, promote participation and overcome barriers to learning and participation for all people. All differences according to age, gender, ethnicity, language, health status, economic status, religion, disability, lifestyle and other forms of difference are acknowledged and respected. Consequently, issues that deal with modifications in content, approaches, strategies, activities, and processes in addressing and responding to the diversity of needs for all learners rotates around the lecturer/teacher/academic staff who interacts with these learners more in the teaching/learning process.

Consequently, inclusions of students who are deaf in learning refer to their being educated within a classroom of students with normal hearing (Cohen, 1995). Inclusion differs from 'mainstreaming' in that mainstreaming may refer to a variety of degrees of contact with hearing students, whereas, in inclusion, the student who is deaf is actually placed in a classroom with hearing students. Inclusion may involve a range of services including interpreters, note-takers, teacher aides, teachers of students who are deaf, and consultants, but these services are provided within the context of regular classrooms.

According to the Global Economics of Disability Annual Report of 2014, there are 56.7 million people representing 18.7% of the non-institutionalized population in the US above the age of 5 years, identified themselves as having a disability. According to the US Census 2010 Bureau population report, the global estimate of the population of persons with disability is 1.27 billion people. These persons with disability have witnessed firsthand challenges in interacting with mainstream infrastructure and attitudes, especially those in educational institutions. Through low educational outcomes and lack of adequate skills, they cannot be integrated into the workforce.

Incorporating disabled students within an inclusive higher education environment is the key concern of every university in the world. According to Hurst (1996) participation of disabled students in higher education is an issue both of equal opportunities and of empowerment for the students concerned. Higher education is an opportunity for students with a disability to increase their knowledge, develop social skills, and obtain good qualifications and to expose themselves to exchange of ideas as an experience for empowerment. Successful completion of their degree courses is a great milestone which gives them entry into the labor market.

However, disabled students tend to encounter barriers to learning at the university that leads to poorer outcomes as compared to other students when entering the same university (Riddell et al., 2002). In looking to create an inclusive environment universities, therefore, should be looking to reduce the barriers that students encounter in teaching, learning, and assessment. The needs and rights of disabled students as learners in higher education have not been entirely catered for as there are still issues and constraints in the implementation processes of inclusive education.

In developed countries like the USA and Australia, there is a legislation that governsinclusion in higher education. For instance, section 504 of the USA Vocational and Rehabilitation Act (1973) which was made law in 1976 stipulates that; " no otherwise qualified individual with a disability in the United States shall, solely by reason of his or her ability be excluded from participating in, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under any program or activity receiving federal financial assistance." On the same note, the American with Disabilities Act was enacted in 1990. In Kenya, Persons with Disability Act (2003) section 18(i) states that "no person or learning institution shall deny admission to a person with a disability to any course of study by reason only of such disability if the person has the ability to acquire substantial learning in that course. Drawing from such legislation, practices and processes on inclusion from universities such as University of Edinburgh (which reported in the Student Disability Service Annual Report 2013/2014, the vision, mission and core values that support students with impairments in fulfilling their academic potential, working with academic staff and other university colleagues/professionals, to create an accessible learning and teaching environment

Among the objectives of the university education in Kenya, that emphasizes on capacity building and inclusion, as stipulated in The Universities Act No.42 (2012) include; university education shall provide the highest standards in, and quality of teaching, research, training and retraining higher level professional, technical and management personnel; fostering of a capacity for independent critical thinking among its students; promotion of gender balance and equality of

opportunity among students and employees; and promotion of equalization for persons with disabilities, minorities and other marginalized groups. Through the Placement Board (PB) universities shall in the performance of its functions uphold equity and balanced access to university and college education and develop suitable criteria to promote affirmative action and other strategies for the marginalized, the minorities and persons with disabilities.

Thus, as policies, academic programmes, and infrastructure in universities are being developed and modified to permit students with disabilities to complete their degree programs, it must be understood that the person at the center of better learning outcomes by students with disability and for high productivity in the labor market is the academic staff (teacher). This means that there is a need to develop academic staff in professional skills that can make them effective in serving these students with disabilities as per their diverse learning needs. In most educational institutions, implementation of inclusion policies has been uneven (Evans and Lunt, 2002). There have been failures and difficulties, among the academic staff in educating students with disabilities. Florian and Rouse (2001) has pointed out that one of the greatest barriers to the development of inclusion of children with disability is because most teachers do not have the necessary knowledge, skills, and attitudes to carry out this work, which makes it difficult for children with disability to achieve due to uncertainty about professional and inadequate preparation of teachers for deaf and blind children (Ainscow,1999).

Although there is widespread support for inclusion at a philosophical level, there are some concerns that the policy of inclusion is difficult to implement because teachers are not dwell prepared and supported to work with deaf and blind children in inclusive ways. McLaughlin and Rouse (2000) emphasized inclusion requires teachers to accept the responsibility for creating schools in which all children can learn and feel they belong. Ainscow (1999) and Ainscow *et al.* (2006) suggests that one way of overcoming these difficulties is to reconsider the roles, responsibilities, and identities of teachers. Ainscow (1999) added that teachers are crucial because of the central role they play in promoting participation.

This study focused on the influence of capacity building of academic teaching staff in mainstreaming disability interventions for students with special needs in public universities in Kenya, a case of the University of Nairobi. University of Nairobi (UoN), like other public universities, has a disability mainstreaming policy, through which university staff is oriented and in service on matters of disability, in order to facilitate the needs of students with special needs in the university. UoN developed disability mainstreaming policy in 2011, in order to meet the Government requirement. The Disability Mainstreaming Policy at UoN adopted a definition of disability from Kenya's Persons with Disability Act (2003), where disability is "physical, sensory, mental or other impairments including any visual, hearing, learning or physical incapacity which impacts adversely on social, economic or environmental participation". In the policy, disability may take many forms including; physical disabilities, hearing impairments, cognitive impairments, and psychological disorders. The question that this study is; how effective is the academic staff when interacting with these groups in the teaching-learning process in terms of teaching strategies, andteaching-learning resources?

The disability mainstreaming policy puts the percentage of PWDs at 4.6 percent estimated at 1650 students in 2012. In 2014, UoN had 62,040 Students (currently, in 2015, there are estimated to be 68000 students), 2,500 Academic Staff and 5,400 Administrative and Technical Staff. The assumption in the policy is that if 3% of this population constitutes PWDs the estimated number of PWDs would stand at 2040 students whose learning needs should be taken care off.

The goal of UoN Disability policy is to promote the full inclusion of students and staff with disabilities into the full life o the institution. This will be done through short, medium and long-term interventions. The short-term

interventions include; establishment of disability support desk in every college; all colleges to embark on disability awareness programmes on the continuous basis and to enumerate students and staff with disabilities periodically. The medium-term interventions include; modification of existing structures and facilities (toilets, libraries) to make them more conducive for use by persons with disabilities; modification of existing environment to make it more disability compliant environment; provision within UoN budgets, and support services(wheelchairs) to PWDs. The longterm interventions include; enhance full inclusion of PWDs during construction of new buildings and comply with the provisions of disability act (2003) in addressing special needs of PWDs at the university. All these interventions aim at creating a learner friendly and conducive environment for all the PWDs including students with disabilities and the academic staff who interacts with the students to ensure better learning outcomes for students with disabilities. By the year 2013, UoN is supposed to have worked out all mechanisms on short term, medium term, and long term interventions. By the year 2015, all the interventions are supposed to be in place and UoN should be by now a disability compliant environment.

Since the inception of the UoN disability Policy, there have been efforts towards having awareness and sensitization programmes for the university staff to enable them to curb discrimination against people with disability in the university. According to the report by International Disability and Development Consortium (2008) persons with disability are in many cases subjected to discrimination and denial to access to education.

The Varsity Focus magazine (2014) edition reported on the University of Nairobi launch of the film on deaf role models, stating what they have gone through to be where they are now. In the same magazine, it was reported that the university has plans to offer diploma and degrees in sign language interpreters in order to meet the demand for qualified interpreters. The question is, how many of these sensitization programmes targeted academic staff as far as training them on skills, knowledge, and attitudes are concerned in disability aspects is concerned, except for the College of Biological and Physical Sciences? How many of the academic staff trained, sensitized or involved in the sensitization programmes can effectively interact with students with a disability in the teaching -learning process? According to the Strategic Plan (2013 -2018), 90% of the teaching staff was trained in pedagogical and andragogic skills. The question is, how many of the 90% trained teaching staff, were trained in the acquisition of skills, knowledge, and attitudes that can enable them to interact with students with a disability in the teaching-learning environment?

Issues, Controversies, and Problems in Mainstreaming Disability Interventions

Capacity building is significant in the achievement of organizational goals and in the attainment of high productivity levels. Capacity building ensures that the staff has the essential basic skills to effectively participate in the implementation processes in every institution. Similarly, in educational institutions, especially, in mainstreaming disability interventions, capacity building ensures that staff at all levels acquires essential basic skills and attitudes in interacting with students with disabilities. According to the Global Economics of Disability Annual Report of 2014, there are 56.7 million people representing 18.7% of the non-institutionalized population in the US above the age of 5 years, identified themselves as having a disability. According to the US Census 2010 Bureau population report, the global estimate of the population of persons with disability is 1.27 billion people. These persons with disability have witnessed firsthand challenges in interacting with mainstream infrastructure and attitudes, especially those in educational institutions. Through low educational outcomes and lack of adequate skills, they cannot be integrated into the workforce. These means that there is a need to develop academic teaching staff in professional skills that can make them effective in serving this great population as per their diverse learning needs.

World Health Organization (WHO) (2013)'s epidemiological data estimate the global prevalence of Autism Spectrum Disorders (ASDs) to be one person in 160 people accounting for more than 7.6 million people with disability adjustments. In WHO's (2013) consultation report on ASDs and other developmental disorders; "From raising awareness to building capacity"; ASDs represent a vulnerable group, that is subject to marginalization, stigmatization, and discrimination including unjust deprivation of health and education services. Autism was first recognized as an area of concern by UN General Assembly as a threat in 2008 and in 2012 the UN General Assembly realized the need for innovative, integrated approaches for implementation of feasible, effective and sustainable intervention programs for ASDs. Among the key objectives of WHO (2013) on these interventions was for strengthening capacities to address the needs and make changes in the ASDs environment including schools, with involving of policymakers and training institutions such as universities. These interventions should be supported by resource allocation strategies and changes in curricular of the professionals involved.

Prakash (2012) and Ainscow (1999) have suggested that it is important to evaluate teachers' attitudes to inclusion of DYP in mainstream classrooms. Shahminan (2012) in a study on "A critical Exploration of Deaf Young People's (DYP) underachievement in the School of Sport and Education, Brunei University   explored the tensions experienced by deaf young people with hearing parents, hearing parents with little or no experience of deafness prior to the birth of their deaf children and language teachers with a lack of skills and knowledge of deafness in the implementation of an inclusive education system in Brunei Darussalam. When teachers in inclusive classrooms do not have any training on how to handle students with disabilities, struggling students fall behind academically and may exhibit behavior problems. As a result, teachers may become overwhelmed (Martel, 2009). Reactive and adverse teaching methods result in teacher frustration and can cause the teachers to withdraw from their position as an educator (Baker, 2005). However, teachers who are trained to use various research-based teaching methods, both instructional and behavioral, are better prepared to educate in diverse learning environments (Baker, 2005). UoN academic teaching staff, seem to handle students in an inclusive classroom, with little or no knowledge of basic skills on how to interact with students with a disability.

Theoretical Framework

The theoretical basis for this study focused on indicators of academic teaching staff effectiveness and models on how scholars conceptualize disability. Models of disability are frameworks which help to explain ways in which society responds to disability. This study anchored on two classical models of disability, which include; the medical model and the social model of disability. The indicators that are considered for academic staff effectiveness include; academic staff awareness levels, resources strategies put in place by the university, teaching strategies applied by academic staff; academic staff utilization of resources and assessment strategies applied on students with disabilities. Combined theoretical frameworks were also in consideration incognito as appliances in the study including Maslow's Hierarchy of needs and cognitive theories. But teaching staff effectiveness in interaction with learners with disabilities has deep roots in the medical and social models of disability. The models are explained below:

The medical model of disability emerged from the development of modern medicine in the19th century, along with the enhanced role of the physicians in society. The medical model tends to view disabled people as having physical problems to be cured. The disabled person is relegated to the passive role of the patient with medical personnel and care professionals making decisions- even about issues unrelated to impairment, such as how the individual should dress what he or she may eat. This model is problematic because of its excessive focus on the desirability of fixing the disabled

person's impairment. The quest for a cure is often protracted, painful, and unnecessary; it means that the rest of life is put on hold while professionals strive to return the body to a more 'normal' level of functioning. Corrective surgery is used to extend and straighten limbs, calipers are applied, and people are encouraged to try to walk, rather than use wheeled mobility appliances; deaf people are taught to speak and lip-read. Health-care professionals may refuse to tell disabled patients and their families that there is no cure for their condition, in the mistaken belief that this will sustain hope that they one day might be 'normal'. But if it happens that the impairment cannot be fixed, the disabled person is regarded as being beyond hope: his or her life is seen as worthless. By this stage, such a negative assessment may well become internalized by the person concerned. In the education sector, disability is really an issue as depicted in the graph below; a student is the problem which needs to be dealt with.

The social model of disability is about changing the system to fit the student, not the student to fit the system. It locates the problem of exclusion firmly within the system, not the person or their characteristics. It originated in the early days of the disability civil rights movement and provided a radically different definition of disability that influenced understanding and practice. It states that society is disabling, not the particular impairment or condition that a person may have. The social model is contrasted with the medical, charity or individual models of disability, and helps us to understand the differences between special, integrated and inclusive education. Such a concept and approach is described by disabled people themselves as 'the social model'. This refers to the way in which society organizes itself, taking little account of people who have impairments and thus excluding them from participation in the mainstream of social activities. The social model identifies three major barriers that confront disable people who have impairments: physical (exclusion from the built environment), institutional (systematic exclusion or neglect in social, legal, educational, religious, and political institutions), and attitudinal (negative valuations of disabled people by non-disabled people). Removing these barriers is possible and has a hugely beneficial impact, both on the lives of disabled people and on the whole community. Adopting the social model of disability does change the way in which services and assistance should be given, placing them in the wider context of disabled people's lives. Disabled people's needs are basically the same as non-disabled people's: for life, love, education, employment, full participation in society, access to adequate services (including medical and rehabilitation services when necessary) as of right, and some choice and degree of control in their lives. The social model has allowed many disabled people to regain control of their own lives, becoming the experts on their own experience and changing their outlook in fundamental ways. An understanding of the social model provides a radically different framework with which to understand the discrimination that arises as a result of impairment. The social model describes the true nature of the problem of disability. The problem is not in the individual, nor in his or her impairment. The impairment exists, but its significance is neutral. The problem of disability lies in society's response to the individual and the impairment, and in the physical environment, which is mainly designed (largely by non-disabled people) to meet the needs of non- disabled people. Disability takes on a social dimension and leads to social exclusion and the denial of human rights. The solution to the problems of disability must, therefore, come from change within the families, communities, and societies in which disabled people are living, rather than from changes in the impaired individual (as suggested by the medical model).

They reveal the attitudes that the society and individuals have towards disability which affect the way people think and behave towards disabled people or students. These attitudes impact on outcomes for disabled people in the way disabled people are treated and participate in society.

Hay and Mcber (2000) in their model of teacher effectiveness, did research that was used to design a framework describing effective teaching, based on the findings, of what effective teachers do in practice at different stages in the profession. According to these findings there were three factors in teachers' control that significantly influence pupil progress. These factors include teaching skills, professional characteristics, and classroom climate. These three factors form measures of teacher effectiveness which influence pupil progress. Classroom climate provides another tool for measuring the impact created by a combination of the teacher's skills, knowledge and professional characteristics. Climate is a measure of the collective perceptions of pupils on dimensions of classroom environment that have a direct impact on their capacity and motivation to learn. Taken in combination these three factors provide valuable tools for a teacher to enhance the progress of their pupils.

Significance of the Study

The study findings aim at informing university policy, improving pedagogical practices and enhancing institutional development leading into a center that can specifically train the academic staff and other staffs, in skills, knowledge, and attitudes that make them in interacting with students with a disability effectively for better learning outcomes and high productivity in labor market. Findings are of practical use to students, academic staff, and deans of schools, deans of students, registrars, and entire university fraternity in self-assessment on skills of inclusion of students with special needs and interacting with persons with disability thus making UoN environments disability compliant and disability friendly. The findings may call for adaption to continual change through which there will be a revision in teaching strategies, designing and implementing workable resource strategies, re-development of infrastructure that is conducive for all groups of students with special needs in all university premises. One critical dimension may be on whether the University of Nairobi as a world class university may set the lead pace in construction and management of an institute of special education with higher mandate to train all staff of all calibers and management levels on skills, attitudes, and knowledge in all aspects of inclusiveness as far as persons with disability are concerned.

Since this research touches on disability policy issues, the findings may pave way for a shift in institutional culture and strategy development on modernization in the professional development of the academic staff or teachers in general, at pre-service and in service; taking into consideration the changing technological advancements in the global arena. Findings from this research are envisaged to inform, help promote and strengthen theories and policies on issues of not only students with special needs but all persons with disability and their inclusion into various structures, systems, and institutions, not only in Kenya but also regionally and globally.

Target population of the Study

The study covered the University of Nairobi. The University of Nairobi currently has 30 Faculties, Schools, Institutes, Centres; over 300 programmes, 68,000 students, 2,500 academic staff, 5,400 administrative and technical staff. However, for the study population, the concentration was kikuyu campus as a College of Education and External Studies (specifically, training teachers for secondary schools and post-school institutions). Regular students who participated in the study were drawn from 2015 fourth year cohort (due to their duration in the university). Students with disabilities were drawn from all levels of learning in the college, as they are minimal in number. Both the university academic administrative registrars, college registrar, college dean of the student, dean of school and sampled academic staff members and college librarian participated in this study. Indicators considered for academic staff effectiveness include; academic staff awareness of disability policy interventions and needs of students with a disability, academic staff training in

disability skills, resources strategies, and assessment procedures for students with a disability.

METHODOLOGY

This was a case study with a descriptive survey approach. Koul (1998) states that descriptive studies involve events that have already taken place and are related to the present condition. Both quantitative and Qualitative data were collected. In determining the sample size Gay et. al. (2006) principle was applied; that for descriptive research it is common to select 10% to 20% if the population size is around 1500 and 50% if the population is around 500. In qualitative research determining sample size will depend on the extent to which the selected participants represent the range of potential participants in the setting. The second indicator for determining sample size will depend on the redundancy of the information gathered from the participants. This had to be applied to this study dealing with the same disability policy interventions on a large population of students and academic staff. The sample size was 250 academic staff members and 800 students. Stratified random sampling was employed where students were divided into two purposively strata; those with a disability and those without a disability. All those with a disability were purposively selected for the study and those without a disability a 50% rule was applied. The studyemployed document analysis and the questionnaire as a key tool for data collection; therewere seven sets of the questionnaire; Questionnaire for the academic staff, questionnaire for the student, questionnaire for the student with a disability, questionnaire for the registrar, dean of the school, dean of students and librarian. The questionnaire collected data on UoN disability mainstreaming policy, awareness of policy interventions, academic staff teaching strategies and approaches, resource strategies and constraints, training needs of academic staff, needs of students with disabilities, academic staff utilization of resources and assessment strategies. The data obtained from the field was cleaned, coded, keypunched into a computer and analyzed. The data was transcribed and categorized into themes in relation to the objectives of the study. Quantitative data emanating from closed-ended questions in the questionnaires were analyzed using descriptive statistics Presentation was given in tables and graphs.

FINDINGS OF THE STUDY

Majority 11(78.6%) of students with a disability were male while 3(21.4%) of students were female. Student distribution included 14.3% of disabled students were in Master's degree (M.A), the same number of students were in Master's degree (Med). Data further show that 5(35.7%) of disabled students were in Bachelor's Degree Bed level of study while the same number of students were in the Bachelor's Degree Arts level of study, 7.1% of disabled students were in 1st year undergraduate, the same number of students were in 2nd year undergraduate and in 2nd year masters' degree. Data further show that 4(28.6%) of disabled students were in 3rd year undergraduate while 7(50.0%) of disabled students were 4th-year undergraduate. Majority 12(85.7%) of disabled students were in a regular/ module I programme while 2(14.3%) Parallel / Module II programme. Findings show that 1(7.1%) of disabled students were in Literature, Kiswahili and Economics department, 3(21, 4%) of students were in Language and humanities, 2(14.3%) of students were in Language and humanities while 5(35.7%) of students were in Education department. Data shows that 4(10.5%) of students were in1st-year undergraduate, 7.9% of students were in 2nd-year undergraduate, 21.1% of students were in 3rd-year undergraduate while 23(60.5%) of students were in 4th-year undergraduate. To determine the social interaction among students with and those without a disability,38 students across various levels were interviewed. Findings also revealed that 75% of the teaching staff used lecture methods in classes which had blind and deaf students. Most lecturers (95%) had no knowledge of sign language and braille letters. Their alertness to interaction with students who had different types of disabilities was minimal as they did not know how to interact with them.

Marking of braille examinations by blind students had to be taken to those with specialties in braille language sourced out of the university.

CONCLUSIONS, RECOMMENDATIONS, AND INTERVENTIONS

From the key findings of the study conclusions of the study indicate that lack of relevant, individualized and specialized resources, equipment, facilities and infrastructure impacted on effective lesson interactions; teaching and learning methodologies were affected by use of normal policy recommendation language of instruction which does not give any specifications on use of sign language symbols for deaf students, content preparation modes took normal classroom formats with no braille or computerized readings, lack of skills, stereotyped attitudes, reactions, and engagements were observed, lack of understanding in handling students living with disabilities not only influenced academic teaching staff effectiveness in mainstreaming disability interventions but also influenced learning outcomes among students living with different disabilities.

The study recommended a scheduled and structured sensitization capacity building programme where academic teaching staff are regularly given orientation and mentoring on strategies and language of handling students with disabilities; and periodic in-service short-term courses by those specialized in skills of sign language, braille reading, intellectual psychological counseling, speech skill identification; which will assist the teaching staff to handle and interact with students living with different types of disabilities during instruction, assessment, project supervision sessions, and learning consultations with students with disability. This will equip academic staff with basic communication skills and methodologies; and enhance effective academic teaching staff interaction with students with disabilities.

Interventions Deduced from the Findings of the Study Include

- The short-term interventions include; initiate capacity building programs for academic staff in courses that give skills, knowledge, and attitudes on handling learners with special needs; assessing the functioning of disability support desk in every college; establish how the various colleges have embarked on disability awareness programs on a continuous basis and to enumerate students and staff with disabilities periodically.

- The medium-term interventions include; continuous audit check on modification and maintenance levels of existing structures and facilities (toilets, libraries) to make them more conducive for use by persons with disabilities; modification of the existing environment to make it more disability compliant environment; provision within UoN budget of support services(wheel chairs) and other essential services to PWDs.

- The long-term interventions include; establishment of an enhanced regional hub and center of excellence/ institute in Africa, at the University of Nairobi with full facilities and materials that comply with the provisions of disability act (2003) in addressing special needs of PWDs; and train professionals on skills, knowledge, and values on how to interact with PWDs from various organizations, regionally, nationally and internationally at the university**.**

- A great need for funding to implement intervention No.1, 2 and 3 above, in ensuring that all those students living with special needs in all educational institutions and other PWDs in other organizations are catered for more effectively. All strength is in capacity building initiatives of the staff who interact with them.

- Benefits of this funding will include improved quality of education and learning among students with special needs; increased skilled manpower among the academic staff ready to exchange these skills with another university academic faculty in universities in Kenya and Africa; exchange programmes in institutions of higher learning in practicum initiatives all over the world. An investment best for those with vulnerabilities in higher education, globally**.**

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