

Perspectives of parents on participation in academic performance of hearing impaired learners: a case study of a special School Kenya

The role played by parents in the academic achievement of learners cannot be over emphasized. Despite the Kenyan government policy requiring parents to be actively involved in the education of the Hearing impaired (HI) learners, the extent to which parents in Bondo sub county get involved in their children's education is wanting. This study was formed on the premise that there are many factors that influence parental participation in their children's education. This case study design, utilizing a qualitative approach and framed from the behaviorist theoretical perspective aims at finding out factors influencing parental participation in the education of the HI learners in a special school in Bondo Sub County. The study attempted to achieve the following objectives; to find parents views on the education of the HI, to establish the opinions of parents on the roles they play in enhancing success in education of the HI, to find out the understanding of parents on challenges faced while participating in the education of the HI and to determine the perceptions of parents on strategies that they employ while participating in the education of their HI children. The study targeted total population of 83 respondents who included 78 parents of the HI learners, 4 class teachers and 1 head teacher. The study sample comprised of 23 parents of HI learners, 3 class teachers and 1 head teacher. The study used purposive sampling technique to select the only special secondary school for the HI in Bondo Sub County. Simple random sampling was used to select the 23 parents while saturated sampling was used to select 3 class teachers and one head teacher. Data was collected through interviews, focus group discussions (FGDs) and document analysis. Trustworthiness and authenticity of the qualitative data was achieved by logical coding and organizing of data into appropriate themes for the final analysis. The study instruments were validated by two experts from the department of special education. The analysis was through selective coding of common themes and concepts and presented based on each study objective. The study found out that parents were well aware of the value that academic performances bear on their children. It also found out that parents are aware of and play the various roles in order to enhance their learner's academic performance. Another finding of this study was that most parents faced a myriad of challenges for instance economic challenges in their participation in their learner's education. The study also found out that most parents did not have any other way in which they can help their children in school apart from the assistance that their hearing impaired learners get from the teachers. This study will be significant in helping parents be active

participants in the education of their HI learners. Additionally, the study would help the Kenya Institute of Curriculum Development (KICD) put more emphasis on schools to ensure policy is in place to support parental participation.