

Research Article

Management Challenges Facing Enrolment of Hearing Impaired (HI) Students in Secondary Schools for Inclusive Education (IE)

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Abstract: Though Hearing impaired (HI) learners have been a subject of educational attention globally, for many years history reveals that, over 88% educators, parents and care givers believe that HI children are either incapable of learning or have serious limitations to their potential leading to many of them failing to be taken to school. The purpose of the study was to establish management challenges facing enrolment of hearing impaired (HI) students in Kenyan secondary schools for inclusive education (IE). The study involved 2 principals, 35 teachers and 133 HI learners drawn from the only 3 existing schools for HI offering inclusive education in Kenya selected by simple random sampling technique. It adopted a descriptive survey design. Data was collected by use of questionnaires and interview schedules. The study revealed that; low enrolment of HI students into the inclusive education was as a result of lack of funds, lack of parental support and lack of information on the inclusive education for HI students. It recommended that; there should be additional funding in form of grants and aids from both governmental and non-governmental organizations for inclusive education for HI learners. Sensitization of the public on the benefits of inclusive education on HI learners should be enhanced so as to improve HI learners' enrolment in Kenyan public secondary schools.

Keywords: Management, Challenges, Hearing Impaired (HI) Inclusive Education (IE).

INTRODUCTION

Inclusive schools must recognize and respond to the diverse needs of students, accommodation of both different styles and rates of learning and ensuring quality education to all through appropriate curricula, organizational arrangements, teaching strategies, resource use and partnerships with their communities (United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization – UNESCO, 1994). The statement approved by ninety two governments, was the first international recognition that in order to meet the needs of students with special needs, the goal for these students should be changed from 'Inclusion in Education' to 'Inclusive Education' (Republic of Kenya, 2005). Regular schools with this 'Inclusive' orientation are the most effective means of combating discriminatory attitudes, creating welcoming communities, building an inclusive society; moreover, they provide an effective education to the majority of children and improve the efficiency and ultimately the cost-effectiveness of the entire education system (UNESCO, 1994).

The Education for All (EFA) Goals, Article 3 (1990) of the Kenyan Constitution of 2008 states, that the learning needs of the disabled, demand special attention and that, steps must be taken to provide equal access to education by All (Republic of Kenya, 2009). Similarly, Article (6) lays emphasis on enhancing the learning environment for All. That, the society must ensure that all learners receive nutrition, health care and general physical and emotional support in order to fully participate in and benefit from education (Republic of Kenya, 2006). Here 'Inclusive Education' implies that children and youth with special educational needs should be included in the educational arrangements made for the majority of children (Republic of Kenya, 2009).

The barriers to achieving 'Education For All' are formidable but must be overcome. Education for children and youth is a global issue (Republic of Kenya, 2003b). International organizations like the United Nations agencies and the World Bank point to how important investment in quality education is; for individual health, cohesive societies and sustainable

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economies (Omorwa, 2005). 'Inclusive Education' is on the global agenda for education and investment strategies to promote EFA and MDGs (World Education Forum, 2000). There is need for creation of safe, healthy, inclusive and equitably resourced educational environments that are conducive to excellence in learning for all (Republic of Kenya, 2003b).

'Full Inclusion for a Hearing Impaired (HI) learner' means a totally supportive, signing and student-centered environment (Muriuki, 2006). This permits the learner to develop to his/her full educational, social and emotional potential (Reilly & Khanh, 2004). Inclusion as a simple placement in a regular school without meaningful interaction with classmates and professionals at all times is tantamount to exclusion of the HI learner from education and society (UNESCO, 2003).

In Kenya, the Ministry of Education in conjunction with DANIDA set up Educational Assessment and Resource Centres (EARCs) all over the country in 1984, for assessment of learners with Special educational needs (Mulusa, 1990). The Kenya National Association for the Deaf (KNAD) was formed in 1987 to advocate for the welfare and constitutional rights of the deaf people. Also in collaboration with University of Nairobi, KNAD founded a KSL Research project to prepare instructional materials for use in schools for the Hearing Impaired (Muriuki, 2006). In 1998 the Kenya Broadcasting Corporation (KBC) initiated Sign Language interpreting services to ensure accessibility of information to the Hearing Impaired (HI) (Ministry of Education, 2005).

The Sessional Paper Number One (Republic of Kenya, 2005) states that to attract more SNE learners, initiatives on clear policy framework and, financial support through grants and grants in aid and bursaries must be given to SNE institutions. This called for mobilization, strengthening and awareness creation programmes to develop and implement a flexible curriculum that is learner centered and friendly; in addition there was urgent need to make all learning institutions truly inclusive by removing key barriers (Reilly & Khanh, 2004). An SNE policy was required to streamline the sector. This had been deliberated on in the Report on National Conference on Education and Training (Republic of Kenya, 2003a) which called on the Ministry of Education to develop a national policy that comprehensively defines all areas of SNE, backed by legal framework, articulating any necessary affirmative action in employment, access to higher education, provision of mandatory assessment and guarantee of placement of SNE learners into regular schools (Ministry of Education (2005). The government of Kenya was to ensure that the SNE learners are able to access specialized medical treatment both in hospitals and within institutions. The Disability Act

(Republic of Kenya, 2003, c) has clearly documented welfare of persons with disabilities.

The demand for SNE at all levels in Kenya has increased as a result of the government's commitment to Universal Primary education (UPE) since 2003. According to UNESCO (2005) statistics, the HI population has grown from 1,710 in 1982 to 6,000 in 2001 and that 30% of this population was out of school. This has created opportunity for a large number of children to enroll in the primary schools than in secondary schools (Reilly & Khanh, 2004). Just a few HI students from poor and disadvantaged backgrounds have managed to excel in education and subsequently landed on good jobs (Muriuki, 2006).

There were three fully established HI secondary schools and sixty one primary schools and units in the country The Report of the Task Force on SNE (Republic of Kenya, 2003, b). The secondary schools were in Central, Nyanza and Western provinces. This showed higher enrolment of HI learners at primary school level than at secondary school level which raised questions on what management challenges could be facing enrolment of inclusive education in secondary schools (Ministry of Education, 2003). The challenges hindered achievement of the many articulated goals towards SNE to ensure access and retention of Hearing Impaired (HI) learners (Miles, 2002). Ministry of Education (2005) points out that equal educational opportunities for all members of the HI community, especially children and young adults needed being developed to benefit from current global changes in education and training. Therefore there was need to address management challenges facing enrolment of hearing impaired (HI) students in secondary schools for inclusive education (IE).

A study by Akhtar (1994) found that, most teachers of mainstream schools felt unsure about teaching hearing impaired children leading to many hearing impaired students being turned away from such institutions. Teachers in special schools believed that the most appropriate education for these children could only be provided in special schools. Nawaz and Saeed (2009) conducted a study of perceptions of primary school teachers towards children with difficulties in hearing and found that, teachers were willing to include children who had difficulties in hearing in their schools in separate classes, if resource teachers were available for support. Teachers also sought government support for training, financial incentives and provisions for inclusion in the educational policy. This shows that most teachers are not receptive of these students (KISE, 2000).

Miles (2002) found that the attitude of society towards children with disabilities was not considerate and has led to many such students not being enrolled in regular public schools. The reasons for this are mainly

superstitious. Disability is seen as a curse or punishment from God, and sometimes it is associated with invasion by an evil spirit (Republic of Kenya, 2006). While studying the attitudes of literate and non-literate persons, Akhtar (1994) reported that most literate respondents believed that children with hearing disabilities could lead a successful life. Non-literate respondents, however, often believed that disability was a curse. They believed that children with disabilities were a burden on society and therefore saw little need to take them to school (Akhtar, 1994).

Statistics reveal that; in the year 2012, 150 HI students, representing 14% and in the year 2013, 156 HI students, representing 15% of the total HI secondary school-going aged children present in Kenya accessed education (UNESCO, 2005). These findings reveal that; though there was a slight increment in enrolment of the hearing impaired (HI) students in secondary schools in Kenya, it was still a poor enrolment since this was just a very small percent as compared to a huge percent of the HI secondary schools-going aged children who did not access education in Kenya (KISE, 2000), hence the need to investigate management challenges facing enrolment of hearing impaired (HI) students in secondary schools for inclusive education (IE).

Objectives of the Study

The study therefore aimed at finding out: impaired Students' Enrolment; their annual enrolment trends; Problems that make them not attend school; Effect of adequacy of the government's funding on their enrolment; and the trend of government's funding for the period 2006 to 2010 for them in Kenyan public Secondary Schools for the Hearing Impaired (HI).

MATERIALS AND METHODS

Research Design

The study adopted a descriptive survey design. This design was the most appropriate since it allowed the researcher to study a relatively large population for accuracy of findings and was concerned with describing, recording, analyzing and reporting conditions that exist or existed (Kothari, 1985). This provided basis for analyzing the present situation and aid in making recommendations for future decision making, concerning inclusive education in Kenyan public secondary schools for HI.

METHODOLOGY

Cohen, Manion and Morison (2000) have recommended samples of at least a minimum of one third of the whole population. From the three secondary schools for HI, two schools were selected using simple random sampling technique; representing over sixty six percent. The schools were Rev. Muhoro and St. Angelas- Mumias schools for HI. The third school was set aside for purposes of the pilot study and was therefore not included in the main study. The researcher then used all the teachers (17 in St. Angelas- Mumias

and 18 in Rev. Muhoro) as well as all of the two principals. To get the sample of HI students, the researcher used simple random sampling technique to select 70 out of 202 students from St. Angelas- Mumias School for HI and 63 out of 178 students from Rev. Muhoro School for the HI. The Simple random sampling technique involved the researcher first of all writing the names of characters on small pieces of papers and then folding them. The papers were then placed in a box and then shaken to achieve a fair mixture. A single paper was picked from the box, its number noted then replaced, until the desired sample size had been obtained.

In statistics, according to Yates, Moore and Starnes (2008), a simple random sample is a subset of individuals (a sample) chosen from a larger set (a population). Each individual is chosen randomly and entirely by chance, such that each individual has the same probability of being chosen at any stage during the sampling process, and each subset of k individuals has the same probability of being chosen for the sample as any other subset of k individuals.

Research Instruments that were used in the study were Questionnaires and an interview schedules. Questionnaires were used to collect data from teachers and HI learners. The Questionnaires were divided into two sections; Section One sought demographic information of the respondents while Section Two contained items that sought information on the management challenges in enrolment of hearing impaired learners in schools. The questionnaires were developed using both closed ended questions, and also open ended questions for in depth information. The researcher preferred questionnaires because they are easier to administer to respondents and are convenient for collecting information within a short span of time (Mulusa, 1990). Interview schedules were used to collect data from principals and contained open ended questions which guided the researcher when conducting interviews. According to Mulusa (1990) an interview conveys more information that is relevant to situation and gives a chance to have conversations, back and forth, for interaction purposes.

A piloting of research instruments was carried out in this study to help the researcher to test the reliability. The piloting also helped the researcher in gaining confidence with the study instruments before the real data collection. Embarrassing questions were noted and worked upon. Piloting for this study was done at Kuja Special Secondary School for HI, involving the principal, four class teachers and eight students from each of the four streams.

Mugenda & Mugenda (1999) define reliability as a measure of degree to which a research instrument yields consistent results or data after repeated trials. The study used the internal consistency and test- retest

methods for piloting to test reliability of research instruments. Piloting for this study was done at Kuja Special Secondary School for HI, involving the principal, four class teachers and eight students from each of the four streams. It was expected that a high degree of coherence in the way questions were answered by different respondents would be achieved. In test – retest, different respondents were required to answer the same questions with slightly different wording and the coherence of their answers was assessed. The reliability of the test (instrument) was estimated by examining the consistency of the responses between the two tests.

Validity is defined as the degree to which the measured indicators really measure what they are supposed to measure (Kathuri & Pals, 2002). Validity was achieved when questions on how well the obtained data analysis was a representative of the concept under study. The study expected to achieve both content and face validities. Content validity refers to the representation of the study items on the instrument, as they relate to the entire domain of content being measured. The content validity measure must sample adequately, the domain of content the researcher claims it measures. This is determined subjectively by a thorough examination of the instruments by a panel of experts, literature searches, and pre testing of open ended questions (Wilkinson, 1991). Face validity refers to the appeal and appearance of the instrument. The researcher ascertained face validity of the instruments by subjecting the instrument to a team of experts in the area of study. Retesting the study instruments was done to increase the likely hood of face validity.

The raw data collected was arranged and coded in readiness for analysis. Descriptive statistics were used to analyze findings of respondents’ views on issues not arithmetically calculated while statistical analysis was used to analyze closed ended items. The researcher used the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) version 17.00 for effective analysis of data. Data were presented using frequency distribution tables, bar graphs and pie-charts. Borg and Gall (1993), state that the most widely used and understood standard proportion is the percentage. The researcher computed the percentages of all study items and presented them. The analysis of data was further interpreted by the researcher to answer the research questions.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS
Students’ Enrolment per Class

Not only is lack of access to schooling a violation of Article 28 of the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child, which states the right of all children to free primary education (UNICEF, 1994), but this lack also potentially maintains the cycle of poverty, as without education an educationally excluded adult may not be able to work to earn a living, or participate in political processes (Tomasevski, 2003).

In order to determine the enrolment trends of hearing impaired students per class, the researcher asked them to indicate their classes. The results are as presented on Table 1 and Figure 1.

Table 1: Students’ Enrolment Per Class

Classes		Frequency	Percent
Valid	Form 1	36	26.7
	Form 2	29	21.7
	Form 3	36	26.7
	Form 4	31	23.3
Total		131	98.3
Missing	Systems	2	1.7
Total		133	100.0

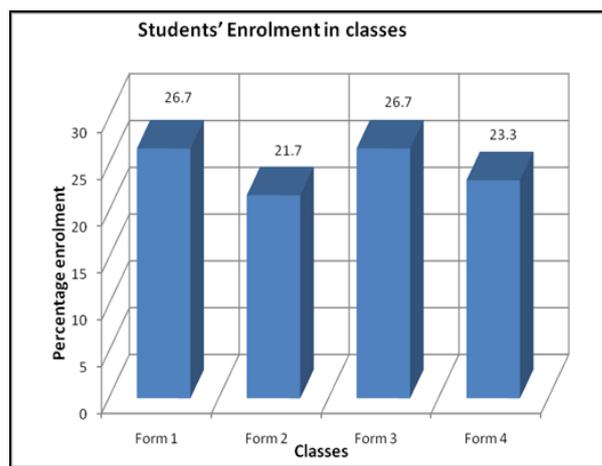


Figure 1: Students’ Enrolment per Class

The findings on Table 1 and Figure 1 show that enrolment of HI students is highest in forms 3 and 1 at 26.7 % in each form. These are students admitted to the schools in 2009 and 2011 respectively. The findings also show that enrolment is lowest in forms 4 and 2 at 21.7% in each form. These are students admitted to the schools in 2008 and 2010 respectively. The findings present a picture where a higher number of HI students are enrolled in form 1 but a number of them drop out before getting to form 2. The higher number of students in form 3 may present a situation where there are restrictions for HI students joining form 4 which is an examination class.

These findings concur with Sharif and Naz’s (2002) study which found out that; print media had not changed public attitudes to people with hearing difficulties. It is clear that lack of awareness and education among the general public have been mainly responsible for the misconceptions and negative attitudes towards disability leading to low enrolments in regular learning institutions. In another study, Akhtar (1994) found that most teachers of mainstream schools felt unsure about teaching these children leading to many hearing impaired students being turned away from such institutions. Teachers in special schools believed that the most appropriate education for these children could only be provided in special schools.

Hearing Impaired Students’ Annual Enrolment Trends

There is no indicator in the Education for All (EFA) Global Monitoring Reports for enrolment, drop-out, or attainment of HI disabled children. In fact, there is no disability indicator at all, which is potentially excluding millions of children from a high-profile global campaign in which they were vaguely included in the category of ‘Children in Especially Difficult Circumstances’ in EFA goal two at the Dakar

Conference (World Education Forum, 2000), where the drive for Education For All was finally agreed by 92 countries. Hence, although EFA is about ‘all’ children, it appears that children with disabilities do not count in the final analysis (Tomasevski, 2003).

To establish annual enrolment trends of HI students, the study obtained enrolment records from school principals. The trends are as presented in Table 4.9 and Figure 4.8.

Table 2: Hearing Impaired Students’ Enrolment Trends

Year	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011
Enrolment 1	135	131	152	170	196	198
Enrolment 2	170	183	188	192	207	238
Average Enrolment	153	157	170	181	202	217

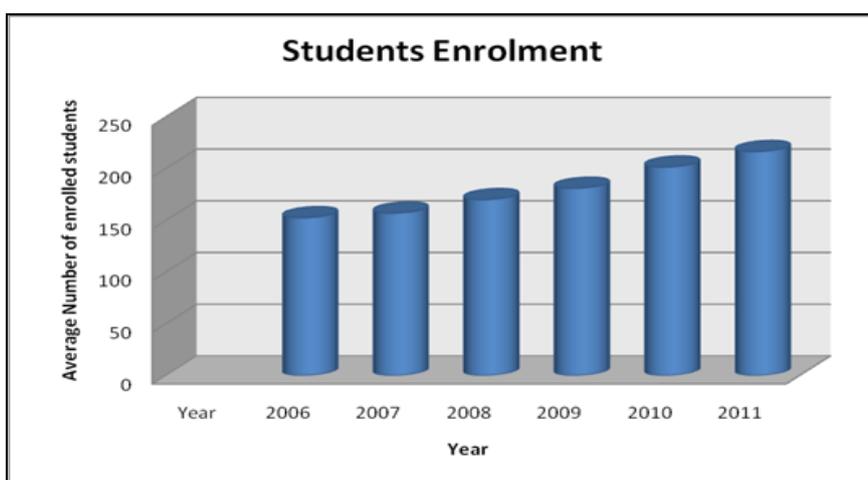


Figure 2: Hearing Impaired Students’ Enrolment Trends

The information presented on Table 2 and Figure 1 shows that enrolment of HI students has gradually increased from 153 in 2006 to 217 in 2011. This is an indication that there has been a gradual increase of enrolment of hearing impaired students into the inclusive education programme in the last six years.

Problems that Make Hearing Impaired Learners Not Attend School

Studies focusing on the perception of children with disabilities revealed that they like to study with other children but are unsure of their capabilities and fear the reaction of other children. Hayat (1994) found that most children who have disabilities were eager to attend ordinary schools as they found it pleasant to study and play with other children. They believed that this would improve their academic achievement and remove the stigma associated with disability. However, they feared that they might be teased or not be able to keep up with the class leading to most of them not enrolling in regular schools (Hayat, 1994).

The study sought to find out from HI students to reveal the reasons they thought deterred HI persons from enrolling in schools. There responses are as presented on Table 4.10.

Table 3: Problems the Hearing Impaired Learners Not Attend School

Problems	Frequency	Percent
Lack of money	53	40.0
Lack of information	33	25.0
Lack of parental support	36	26.7
Lack of schools	9	6.7
Total	131	98.3
Missing System	2	1.7
Total	133	100.0

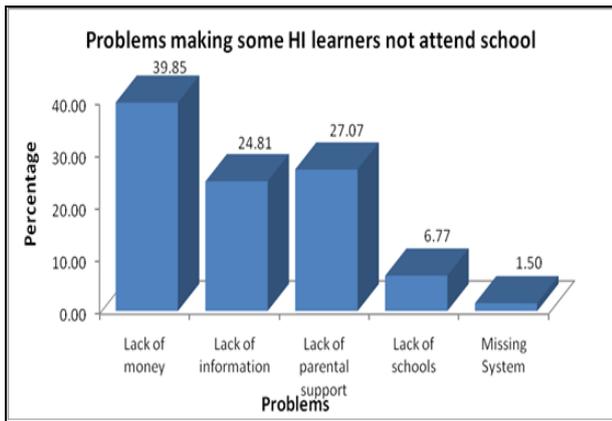


Figure 3: Problems that Make the Hearing Impaired Learners Not Attend School

The findings on Table 3 and figure 3 show that the major embedment making HI students not to enrol in the inclusive education for HI offered in Kenyan public secondary schools is lack of funds, as cited by 39.85% of the HI students. This is followed by lack of parental support as cited by 27.07% as some parents do not see the need to enrol HI children in school; lack of information as cited by 24.81% of the HI students implying that a good proportion of parents with HI children are aware of the Inclusive education programme for HI students but instead they believe that such children should be sent to special schools which in most cases will be beyond their reach; this is further supported by the small percentage of 6.77% of HI learners who see lack of schools as the reason for them not enrolling in schools.

These findings are in line with the findings of Republic of Kenya (2007) which states that there has been inadequate sensitization on the issues of disability and stigma still remains in many school communities. The commission highlights that a lot more needs to be done to facilitate inclusion of children with special needs in regular schools generally by changing the attitudes and stereotypes of students, parents and teachers about children with disabilities (Republic of Kenya, 2007).

In many African communities, disabilities are explained as resulting from God’s punishment for wrongs done to the ancestors or to some person’s problems. As such, the child experiencing any of these conditions is seen as a curse or possessed by the spirits. Such superstitions have led many parents who give birth to children who deviate from the “normal” to hide the child, hence deny him/her access to education. Parents may prioritize taking their other children without special needs to school while others tend to be overprotective towards the child with special needs, thus preventing him/her from taking part in daily life activities. This may hamper the child’s possibilities to develop his/her potentials (KISE, 2007).

Effect of Adequacy of the Government’s Funding on Enrolment of HI

Hussain and Javed (1997) in their study pointed out that; implementation of inclusive education needed proper orientation accompanied by proper government funding, for regular classroom teachers. Special schools were ready to initiate mainstreaming in their schools (reverse mainstreaming) (Republic of Kenya, 2006). The local context of special institutions was often threatened, politicized and overprotective in connection with innovative plans such as inclusive education based on the funds availed by the Government and he Non-Governmental Organizations (KISE, 2007).

The study sought to find out from principals to indicate whether the funds provided by the government are adequate in enhancing enrolment of hearing impaired students in inclusive education programmes in their schools. Their responses are as presented on Table 4 and Figure 4.

Table 4: Adequacy of the Government’s Funding

Adequacy of funds		Frequency	Percent
Valid	Not Adequate	1	50.0
	Fairly adequate	1	50.0
Total		2	100.0

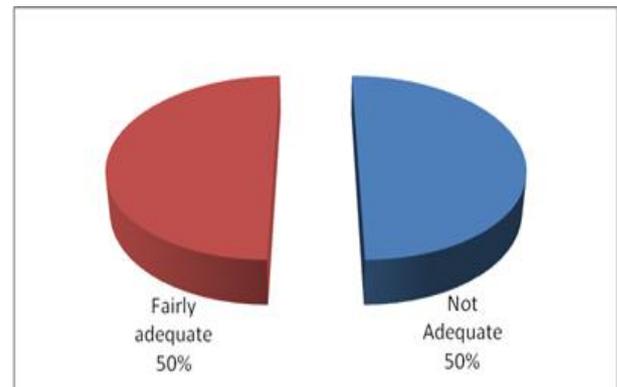


Figure 4: Adequacy of the Government’s funding

The results on Table 4 and Figure 4 show that 50% of the principals felt that the government’s funding was inadequate while the other 50% felt the funding was fairly adequate. In both cases it was a challenge to students’ enrolment. The principal respondents further stated that their other sources of funding included the local & foreign NGOS, organizations for and of HI persons as well as individual donors. The main funding challenges encountered by the principals included; restricted funding, sourcing funds, lack of capacity to implement funding policies and abrupt pulling out of donors.

Trend of Government’s Funding for the Period 2006 to 2010

The Government of Kenya and other stake holders have mixed opinions about supporting education in special schools and inclusive education settings, whereas most teachers are in favour of providing both full financial and educational support in

special education settings than in inclusive education schools (Republic of Kenya, 2003,b).

The study sought to find out from principals to indicate funding provided by the government for the period 2006 to 2010 in their schools. Their responses are as presented on Table 5 and Figure 5.

Table 5: Trend of Governments Funding for the Period 2006 to 2010 in Million Kenya Shillings)

Year	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010
Average Annual Government’s Funding	5.702	6.034	5.3465	4.8945	5.4585

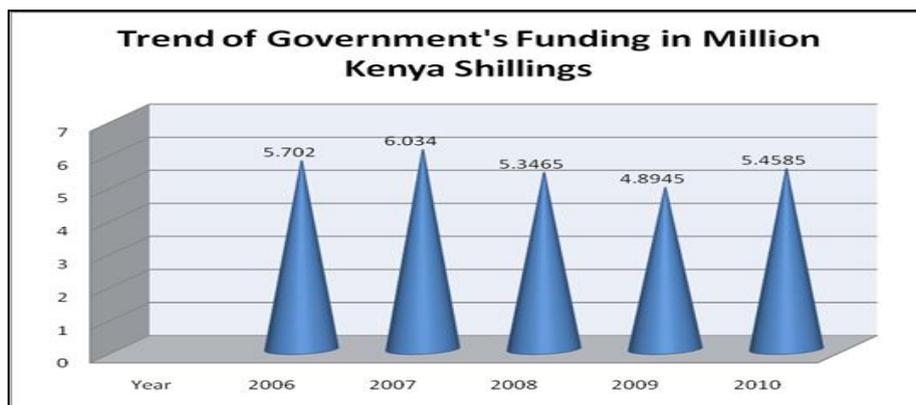


Figure 5: Trend of Government’s funding for the Period 2006 to 2010

Figure 5 shows that the highest funding for the HI schools by the government was in 2007 and least in 2009; one year after the introduction of affordable secondary education in all Kenyan public schools.

The findings of the Republic of Kenya (1999) state that; the available government resources are inadequate in meeting the current demands of quality in education with continuous improvement of every aspect of the education component on a sustained basis. Providing quality education to increasing numbers of students therefore means first expanding the resource base beyond government sources to fill up costing gaps, utilizing the available resources more efficiently, establishing autonomous funding system and strategizing the allocation of funds (Republic of Kenya, 1999).

CONCLUSIONS

Based on the findings the following are the conclusions of the study:

Low enrolment of HI students into the inclusive education was due to; lack of funds, lack of parental support; lack of information on the inclusive education programme to HI students. Another challenge to enrolment according to the principals was funding of the programme due to: restricted funding, problems in sourcing funds, lack of capacity to implement funding policies and abrupt pulling out of donors.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the above conclusions, the study recommends that:

- i. The study recommended there should be additional funding in form of grants and aids from both governmental and non-governmental organizations for inclusive education programme for HI learners. This would provide more opportunities for the increasing numbers of HI learners enrolled.
- ii. Sensitization of the public on the benefits of inclusive education on HI learners should be enhanced so as to improve HI learners’ enrolment in Kenyan public secondary schools.

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