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The Challenges and Prospects of Implementing Special Needs Education in Uganda: A Case Study of Entebbe Children's Welfare Primary School for Special Needs in Wakiso District

This thesis explores the challenges and prospects of implementing Special Needs Education (SNE) in Uganda with reference to Entebbe children's welfare primary school for special needs. The endeavour of this study was, first to create new references for understanding the challenges faced in the implementation of Special Needs Education. Secondly, to find out the attitude of principals, teachers, pupils, students and parents towards teaching and learning SNE. And finally, to examine the future prospects of implementing special needs education to implementers of special needs education in Uganda. The study used a qualitative approach and it was a case study in nature. Quantitative techniques were also used to a smaller extent to supplement the qualitative approach. This was guided by the sensitivity of the topic. Well constructed questionnaires, interview guides, documentary analysis and observations were used to collect data from a multitude of respondents. The study revealed that education makes a difference in everyone's life, but it makes a much greater relative difference in the lives of children with disabilities. The incremental benefits of educating a child with disabilities far outweigh the incremental costs. This means that children with disabilities should be educated at all costs. The findings show that the major challenge of implementing special needs education in Uganda is the negative attitude among the community members, parents and care takers and it counted for 38% of the total respondents. This is coupled by the limited and costly assistive devices that constituted 29% which makes the implementation of special needs education a dilemma to both teachers and parents who cannot afford to buy them at the market rates. Alongside the above, the study also showed that there are prospects for improving the implementation and learning of special education and this is attributed to the favourable policy framework that counted for 28% of the prospects mentioned by the respondents. Representation of people with disabilities at the policy making institution levels as well as good political will also counted for the future prospects of special needs education in Uganda. It is important to understand that all children including children with disabilities can learn and compete with other children, and they all need some form of support in learning though some may need more support than others. The study recommends that for special needs education to be implemented effectively, there is need for government through the line Ministry of Education and Sports to sensitise the community, parents, children and teachers to change the attitudes, behaviour, teaching methods, curriculum, environment and allocation of human and financial resources to meet the needs of all children with learning disabilities.

Keywords: Special Needs Education, Children's Welfare, Primary School for Special Needs, Wakiso District