

Inclusive Practice and Transformative Leadership Are Entwined: Lessons for Professional Development of School Leaders in Kenya

Rose Atieno Opiyo¹

Abstract

Inclusive Education (IE) is arguably a popular discourse in education systems as, not merely a concept that addresses concerns of Learners with Special Needs (LSNs) but rather a relatively broad approach looking into how to transform learning environments to respond to diversity. At the heart of human rights movement, Education for All (EFA) and social equity agenda, IE has lots of educational, social and economic premiums attached to it. Increasingly, what slows down the progress towards IE in Kenya is documented, but still, less is known about leadership acumen of school leaders yet, the art and science of transformation of the school into an effective inclusive environment squarely lies in the province of school leaders. Anchored on the Social Model of Disability, this paper presents results based on an extensive secondary data review. It provides evidence that IE and transformative leadership are closely knit. It urges that all initiatives geared towards supporting effective implementation of IE must interrogate leadership ability of school leaders and develop them as critical ingredients in turning around schools into effective inclusive learning environments.

Keywords: Inclusive Education, School Leaders, Transformative Leadership, Professional Development

Introduction and Background

International commitment to human rights has not only changed our views about individual's "disability" but it has also reduced emphasis on deficits in any social context. According to Ouane (2008), Inclusive Education moves beyond understanding, overcoming or tolerating disability but rather, accepting, valuing and demonstrating a broad concern on gender, ethnicity, social class conditions, health and human rights, to encompass universal involvement, access, participation and achievement.

Arnesen, Mietola & Lahelma, (2009), pinpoint that IE is not just adding on to existing structures, but perhaps a broad outlook that entails transformation of societies, communities and institutions such as schools to become diversity-sensitive. IE represents a belief that all students belong and are valued members of their classroom and school communities (Council of Ministers of Education in Canada {CMEC}, 2008); Specht & Young, 2010). Specifically, Black- Hawkins, Florian and

Rouse (2007, p. 15) look at it as a process of increasing numbers of students attending mainstream schools, who in the past would have been prevented from doing so because of identified special educational needs. In their recommendations, Black and colleagues expressed that promotion of inclusion in regular schools must begin with designing buildings and facilities suitable for LSN. This stance is supported by Jill Black More (2006) who argues that diversity among learners, whether in linguistic, cultural or disability, is a positive force in educational work.

With the above definitions in mind, inclusion means different things to different groups in different contexts. In disability conversations, Inclusive Educational Practice (IEP) addresses the current discourses and dilemma between special education and integration. Broadly, the concept suggests a practice where (a) enrolment practice do not discriminate between learners with or without disability (b) school services and facilities are equally accessible to students with or without disability (c) curriculum programs are designed in such a way that learning needs are catered for (d) assessment and

Full listing of authors and contacts can be found at the end of this article.



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certification procedures are responsive to the learning targets, goals, and outcomes (e) special services and equipment are supplied for learners to experience success in learning and, (f) school environment is friendly to both teachers and learners.

Generally, there is convergence of thought that IE is either, a process, an approach or a programme. As an ongoing process, Ainscow et al (2006) describes IE as that which has not reached a perfect state but rather is on the move. As a program and an approach, Odom (2000) looks at it as setting in which disabled and non-disabled peers benefit from common support services, an approach that entails 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. Odom (2000) also adds that as an approach, it looks at teaching strategies or approaches that address the needs of students with a variety of backgrounds, learning styles, and abilities. To the aforementioned authors, IE is such a multiplex concept, basically, all that can contribute to an overall inclusive learning environment, in which students feel equally valued.

Timmons and Wagner (2008) looks beyond the education environments by seeing it as a foundation to an inclusive society since it provides opportunity for all students to be part of school communities to learn and grow alongside their peers. For these two authors, IE encompasses both academic and social life of a school. Corbett and Slee, (2000) supports inclusion as a philosophy of acceptance:

It is about providing a framework within which all children- regardless of ability, gender, language, ethnic or cultural origin- can be valued equally, treated with respect and provided with equal opportunities at school.... is an unabashed announcement, a public and political declaration and celebration of difference which requires continual proactive responsiveness to foster an inclusive educational culture? (p. 134)

Features and Benefits of Inclusive Education

IE is not a marginal issue on how some learners can be integrated in mainstream education, but rather an approach that looks into how to transform education systems and other learning environments in order to respond to the diversity and improving quality of education for all learners. It addresses and responds

to diversity by providing appropriate responses to the broad spectrum of learning needs, welcomes diversity reforms not only for special education but rather, reform of both the formal and non-formal education system benefiting all learners (Kalambouka, Farrell, Dyson, & Kaplan, (2007). Authors holding this view advance the debate on additional support to students within the regular school system, equal access to education or making certain provisions for certain categories of children. Suffice to say, it is a never-ending search to find better ways of responding to diversity, living with difference and learning from difference. This way it fits as a more positive stimulus for fostering learning, amongst children and adults (Kalambouka, et al (2007).

Despite potential barriers to inclusion (such as teacher workload issues, a shortage of adequate supports, incomplete training for teachers and principals or legal questions) inclusive classrooms have been shown to benefit all students both socially and academically (Canadian Council on Learning, 2009; Cole, Waldron, & Majd, 2004; Crisman, 2008; Katz & Mirenda, 2002). Convincing evidence exists affirming that it provides positive experience for all students. For instance, Timmons and Wagner (2008) identifies IE as a foundation to an inclusive society as it provides opportunity for all students to be part of school communities to learn and grow alongside their peers.

In lieu of the above premiums, authors have continued to express that it should be further broadened to encompass both academic and social life of a school. Specifically, Timmons and Wagner's study (2008) noted that children who are educated in inclusive settings are healthier, do better in school, enjoy going there more, and interact more positively with peers compared to students taught in less inclusive settings. Significant of all, LSNs from the study were more exposed to real environment situations with regards to diversity, and their non -disabled peers adopted to positive attitudes and actions towards them as a result of studying together in an inclusive classroom.

In determining whether education systems are inclusive three concepts emerge: Presence, Participation and Achievement of all students. "Presence" is concerned with whether children are being educated and how reliably and punctually they attend. "Participation" relates to the quality of their experiences whilst they are inschool. To determine this, views of the learners must be incorporated. Finally, "Achievement" is about the outcomes of learning across the curriculum, not merely test or examination results. Definitely, this gives



it the most broad view which urges modifications in content, approaches, structures and strategies, with a common vision to cover all children of the appropriate age range remain a critical responsibility of the regular system as they seek to realization EFA goals (Kalam-bouka, et al.2007)

In an effort to determine presence, participation and achievement, identification and removal of barriers is critical. This encompasses collecting, collating and evaluating information from a wide variety of sources in order to plan for improvement in policy and practice or using such evidence to stimulate creativity and problem-solving (Leithwood & Jantzi, 2006). Understanding of these barriers enables teachers and school leaders to be alert and to consider the impact the differences can cause. This is because it recognizes and serves many different categories of children who may be excluded from the education for instance : LSN, children of immigrants, child domestic workers, poverty stricken children, children of ethnic, language minorities, street children, children in conflict zones, child soldiers, children of prisoners or imprisoned, and children affected or infected with HIV/AIDS (Department for Education and Skills {DfES}, 2004)

In the ensuing definitions we also appreciate that IE shifts away from integration. While the former views learners as the root cause of difficulties in the school, the latter shares in tenets highlighted in the social model of disability which continues to challenge systems to examine the barriers within the educational system and look for ways in which to promote participation and positive learning outcomes of all learner. Terzi points out this in her writing:

Special needs are not needs that arise in a child with disabilities with regard to a system that is fixed. Rather they are needs that arise between the child and the educational system as a whole when the system fails to adopt itself to the characteristics of the child. (Terzi 2005, p. 448)

Primarily, IE aims to (a) bring out the best in the child, without alienating him/her, (b) provide the child with a warm and enriched environment, (c) assist the child in developing basic skills to cope with day to day challenges, (d) enable a child develop life skills for self-reliance, (e) help a child develop a desirable attitude towards society. For effective assimilation of IE, three key aspects – policies, practices and culture – are important. Full presence, participation and achievement of children with disabilities as well as, respect to childrens social, civil and education rights can be

realized by exploring some factors that are always left unexplored in less inclusive setting such as transformative leadership.

Inclusion and Education For All

By welcoming every child, inclusion is an essential element of the whole Education For All (EFA) movement. It is framed within the context of wider international discussions around the United Nations Organizations' agenda ,stimulated by the 1990 Jomtien Declaration. The Salamanca Statement on principles, policy and practice guiding education of LSNs (UNESCO 1994) not only provides a Framework for leveraging policy and practice forward, but is arguably the most significant international document that has ever appeared in IE conversations. In principle, this concept aligns with EFA goals as it seeks to provide universal access to basic education of good quality and compels states to create environments in schools or basic education programs in which children are both able and enabled to learn. Such an environment must be inclusive of children, effective with children, friendly and welcoming to children, healthy and protective for children and gender sensitive.

The development of such child-friendly learning environments has increasingly been an essential part of the overall efforts by countries around the world to increase access to, and improve the quality of, their schools. Sharing at a meeting , held in June 2009 at Oslo on the results of the work of the OECD on equity in education, a Norwegian Minister of Education (Bård Vegar Solhjell) in an opening speech described IE as a new compelling law on quality and equity for all by stating:

Inclusion and equity in education is the best long term instrument we have in order to secure economic progress, as well as democracy and social stability...regular schools with an inclusive orientation are the most effective means of combating discriminatory attitudes, building an inclusive society and achieving education for all.

IE development movement is anchored on human rights, equity and diversity (Riehl, 2000; Winzer and Mazurek, 2012) and around the right of every individual to education, as stated in the 1948 Universal Declaration of Human Rights. In Article 26 , IE is not simply taken as a technical or organizational change but as movement with a clear philosophy that speaks to human right to education. It is a dynamic approach that looks at diversity and individual differences not as



problems, but as opportunities for enriching learning. At the core of this conversation is the pronouncement of UDHR, 1948, Article 26 which states:

Everyone has the right to education... Education shall be free, at least in the elementary and fundamental stages and shall be directed to the full development of human personality, strengthening of respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms. It shall promote understanding, tolerance and friendship among all nations, racial or religious groups, and shall further the activities for the maintenance of peace.

Equally, Article 2 and Article 23 of United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC, 1989) support this stance. In part, Article 23 stipulates:

Children with disabilities should have effective access to and receive education, training, health care services, rehabilitation services, preparation for employment and recreation opportunities in a manner conducive to the child's and to enable him /her achieve the fullest possible social integration and individual development, including his or her cultural and spiritual development.

In the same document (UNCRC, 1989) Article 29, articulates central aims of education in the development and nurturing all children to reach their fullest potential in terms of cognitive, emotional and creative capacities. Addressing this also is the UNESCO Convention Against Discrimination in Education (1960) and the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (1979) as the other key international human rights treaties that not only emphasize the prohibition but also the active elimination of discrimination.

A logical consequence of these rights is that all children have the right to receive the kind of education that does not discriminate on any grounds such as caste, ethnicity, religion, economic status, refugee status, language, gender, disability etc. These conventions not only provide measures be taken by the state to implement these rights in all learning environments but demands a rights-based approach to education which is founded upon three principles (a) access to free and compulsory education, (b) equality inclusion and non-discrimination, and (c) the right to quality education, content and processes.

Guided by the above conventions, United Nations members at the World Conference on Special Needs Education adopted a guiding principle that schools

should accommodate all children regardless of their diverse physical, intellectual, social, emotional and linguistic needs (UNESCO, 1994). The resulting Salamanca Statement recognized the necessity and urgency of providing education for children, youth and adults with special educational needs within the regular education systems (UNESCO, 1994). IE puts emphasis on all groups of learners who may be at risk of marginalization, exclusion or underachievement and gives a moral responsibility to families communities and states to ensure that those groups that are statistically most "at risk" are carefully monitored and that, where necessary, steps are taken to ensure their presence, participation and achievement in the education system. Based on the above declarations countries of the world including Kenya are on the path towards addressing diversity in education environments and realization of inclusive schools.

Inclusive Education in the Kenyan Context

Kenya places education as top agenda in both policy and investment by regarding education as one of the inputs to ensure the quality of life of its citizens. Every child has the right to education irrespective of age, gender, background, socio-economic status, race, caste, creed, religion and ability. The Constitution of Kenya (Republic of Kenya, 2010), section 43 (1), affirms the right of every person to education. Further, section 53 (1) (b) states that every child has the right to free and compulsory basic education. The Sessional Paper No. 1 (Republic of Kenya, 2005a) provides a policy framework for the education sector in Kenya, including the requisite legal context, within which to design, develop and implement inclusive education programs. The constitution outlines policy recommendations for enhancing education access, quality, relevance, equity and efficiency, which are important factors in the overall success of inclusive education.

Specifically, two Special Needs Education Policy Frameworks (Republic of Kenya, 2009; 2012) address a wide range of critical issues impacting on special needs education and provides a comprehensive policy framework that seeks to harmonize education service delivery for LSNs and diverse needs in all education subsectors. The policies recognize that our classrooms have children with different experiences, skills, knowledge, values and abilities which are all invaluable ingredients in classroom and takes due consideration in the wake of increasing diversity in the society, success can only be guaranteed to those children who will live



cooperatively with others.

All these frameworks advocate for including all children with diverse background and abilities and all those usually excluded from school and classroom participation and learning for instance children of remote or nomadic population, children from linguistic, ethnic or cultural minorities, girl child, street and working children, children with disabilities, children affected by HIV/AIDS. The aim is geared towards (a) providing an understanding of the conditions for success for children with diverse needs, (b) achieving equalization of educational opportunity, (c) removing barriers, and (d) attending to the specific needs of those who had been denied so far.

In order to ensure that this happens, the Kenyan Government believes that all learners are entitled to an excellent education that provide them with a genuine opportunity to succeed in inclusive classrooms in inclusive schools. In responding to this vision, mainstream schools and special schools in Kenya are adopting policies and practices that are driven by the desire to be providers of high quality education services to all learners regard less of their learning needs.

The above framework outlines an explicit IE policy and the role of key stakeholders such as school-heads and general education teachers in the realization of this policy in creating of inclusive and child-friendly schools, while simultaneously focusing on a requisite legal framework to ensure that schools respect diversity and ensure equality of learning for all children. This is because schools leaders are recognized as important ingredients in supporting and setting a higher standard for inclusive practice in schools and in communities. They can do this through Strategic Resourcing Ensuring an Orderly and Supportive Environment Promoting and Participating in Teacher Learning and Development Planning, and Coordinating teaching and Evaluating Curriculum.

Who Supports Inclusive Education in Kenya?

It is the responsibility of the Ministry of Education to ensure that school-accessible and child-centered programs are elaborated, implemented and evaluated. However, teachers, parents, communities, school authorities, curriculum planners, training institutes and entrepreneurs in the business of education are among education actors that serve as valuable resources in support of inclusion in Kenya. However, some stakeholders are more than just a valuable resource. They are not only key to supporting all aspects of the

inclusion process but they can also provide the right atmosphere for effective implementation of IE both in school and in society at large.

According to Fullan (2004), progress towards an effective inclusive school culture depends on the willingness and attitude of a number of educational stakeholders in accepting to promote diversity and to take an active role in the lives of students, both in and out of school. Acceptance promotes optimal learning environment for IE and depends largely upon the relationship among teachers, parents, other students and society and more specifically the role of school leaders

Likewise, Lindqvist & Nilholm (2011) affirms that school leaders' belief about inclusion, its process and their view about children's capacity to change and be changed can be reflected in: (a) the way they encourage teacher learning through collaboration, (b) philosophy, inclusive beliefs and practices, (c) the extent to which they collaborate with staff to develop an inclusive philosophy relevant to the schools needs, and (d) the manner in which they actively and personally get involved in developing intervention strategies for at-risk students as they dialogue with parents. As put by Clark, (2010) constant collaboration and training has a possibility of changing ideologies and perceptions of school leaders on inclusion and can simultaneous lead to reconstruction of beliefs tow diversity.

Sergiovanni (2009) believes that school leader's attitude change influences how we organize school to accommodate diverse needs and acknowledge that all children, irrespective of their race, socio-economic status, gender or disability, deserve quality education. Manifestly, this can be detected in a shift in their value system and support for school based inclusion policy and procedures that ensure sustainability (Ainscow & Sandill, 2010). Conversely, negative attitudes towards inclusion is likely to result into exclusivity. It is associated with lack of planning, lack of resources, lack of knowledge of better practices and limited experiences with special needs students (Bobb & Early, 2009; Sergiovanni, 2009).

Fortunately, negative attitudes can be minimized when school leaders learn and acquire the knowledge they need to build inclusive schools, more so, in facilitating teacher learning that will produce inclusive classrooms. Adequate knowledge will enable school leaders transform school into effective inclusive environment (Leithwood & Jantzi 2006). This then calls for preparation of school leaders who can (a) stimulate change in the follower's attitudes and behavior through



empowerment, (b) those who can create a global vision (Bobb & Early, 2009) and (c) reshape corporate culture and works along with the vision towards IE.

For this reason, this paper believes that there are complex and interrelated factors undergird the success of schools with effective inclusive education models and that moving towards more inclusive schools and education systems involves a series of leadership conditions both at the macro and the school level, as well as at the level of pedagogical practices (instructional leadership). Although the Ministry of Education in Kenya, holds the key responsibility of ensuring inclusion in school, school leaders who are ministry representations and in fact 'the eyes' of ministry have a huge responsibility in causing this change based on their transformative leadership acumen.

Transformative Leadership that Promotes Inclusion

Transformational leadership model is used to meet the current demand for innovation in education systems. Indeed current trend in the literature (Cristina and Ann, 2010) supports the idea that (a) school innovations, such as inclusion, do not occur on their own (b) works when it is thoughtfully developed and (c) can only take place when the school leader who is a transformational leader, in consort with the community and faculty uses collaborative decision-making to develop a full inclusion program.

According to Precey, (2008), transformational leaders strive (a) build a compelling vision of a better future with others underpinned by high moral confidence (b) inspire others to follow them and offers individualized support (c) articulate a vision and passion can achieve great things and gets things done by injecting enthusiasm and energy (d) establish shared organizational goals and models best practices and important organizational values (e) display high levels of interpersonal engagement with a deep understanding of personal, team and organizational learning (f) demonstrate expectations of high performance (g) provide intellectual stimulation for others and seek best practices (h) create a productive culture with a commitment to community (i) develop structures to foster participation in decision-making and distribute leadership throughout the organization and do have great personal resilience.

They are leaders who are motivated by the importance of individualized support that promotes student learning, intellectual stimulation, and personal vision. They support others through competence building to create inclusive classrooms, encourage collaboration to

stimulate thinking and are grounded in understanding the needs of individual teachers rather than controlling them to meet desired outcomes (Halliger, 2005). As they seek to influence people by building from the bottom-up rather than from the top down, they become overly concerned with modeling best practices and important organizational values, continuous professional development of teachers, shared decision making and leadership, experimentation, teacher reflection and building relationships with the school community. These are key ingredients for inclusivity. Transformative school leaders are also known to hold firmly to key values of democracy, equity, justice, emphasize social justice and equity and are able to live with tension as they display moral courage and activism.

Based on the above arguments transformative leadership is therefore more likely where schools take on the role of making profound social change where there is great inequality for example in relation to sexism, racism or other forms of profound exclusion. As Christiansen, Heggen and Karseth (2004) share, the job of leaders is to maximize the collective talent and efforts of all those involved in the education enterprise to promote and sustain inclusive cultures, meaning that for sustainability of IE transformative leadership should be our focus.

School leaders are the key to the success or failure of educational reform. They have to develop leadership style that meets the demands of educational change which is seen in the manner in which they (a) provide moral direction which gives meaning and significance to the goals of the school, (b) raise awareness, heighten interest of followers and provide support for the group to carry out the full inclusion project, (c) develop projects and assist in overcoming challenges; provides vision and resources necessary to help teachers accomplish change, and (d) provide encouragement and energy to help make the innovation successful and the implementation of full inclusion.

Significantly, four themes emerge in relation to transformative leadership in effective schools: fostering shared vision, planning and decision-making processes, creating collaborative structures and processes using data to make decisions about curriculum and instruction, and understanding and utilizing policy to create comprehensive school and district wide systems. These themes mirror those identified by Waldron, McLeskey, and Redd (2014) in their case study of a highly effective, inclusive school. For this research, the themes are crucial because each point to potential areas of



implications not only for practice but also for focus of and approaches to school leadership development.

Salisbury and McGregor (2002) assert that inclusive education has emerged as a school wide improvement approach sharing characteristics of innovativeness, commitment to diversity, and a strong emphasis on school improvement. So school leaders must share common personal attributes such as sharing decision-making power with their staff, leading their school by example, extending the core values around inclusiveness and quality initiatives throughout the school, and actively promoting learning communities.

Waldron, McLeskey, and Redd (2011) acknowledge that strong school leadership is pivotal to effective implementation of inclusive education. Their description of the characteristics of effective inclusive schools and the personal attributes of school leader of such schools are consistent with those articulated by Corbett and Slee (2000). Hehir and Kartzman (2012) affirm that inclusive schools are dynamic, problem solving organizations.

Strong school leaders to them is one who creates both a sense of common purpose and internal accountability as well as conditions for high-quality teaching and learning to take place. Their stance is that complex and interrelated factors undergird the success of schools with effective inclusive education models. Successful inclusive schools embrace comprehensive school-wide approaches, including a clear vision of high expectations and universally designed instructional practices that address both academic and behavioral components of schooling.

In order to develop effective inclusive schools, there is need for school leaders to establish collaborative frameworks, collegiality, and a commitment to support diversity among students (Kugelmass, 2004). Though not explicit to inclusive education implementation, Fullan (2014) articulates what he terms the three keys that maximizing a leader's impact. He suggests that a leader can achieve this by (a) ensuring intense instructional focus and continuous learning are the core work at the school. (b) working with district and system player in order to access the wide range of resources within the system to leverage leadership and inclusion success, and (c) be a change agent to foster school effectiveness and improved student learning and achievement. The conceptualization of the school leaders as a change agent is critical to inclusive implementation and its sustainability.

Based on seven critical competencies suggested

by Kirtman (2013), Fullan (2014) asserts that as the change agent, the school leaders requires these competencies to facilitate the building of personal and organizational capacity for greater leadership success. With these competencies, school leaders are able to (a) challenge the status quo by interrogating common practices, takes risks, and explores innovations with the aim of improving the learning of all students, (b) build trust through clear communication and expectation to ensure improved performance and organizational effectiveness, (c) creates commonly owned plan for success by working to ensure ownership of the plan, monitoring implementation, and making adjustments as appropriate, (d) focus on the team over self by supporting the professional growth of all staff and seeking critical feedback, (e) create a sense of urgency for sustainable by mobilizing people to tackle core issues while matching passion and urgency with requisite skills, (f) commits to continuous improvement for self by seeking learning opportunities and innovative ideas to ensure sustained improvements, and (g) build external networks and partnerships to adequate and sustainable support that makes a positive difference to the organization (Fullan, 2014).

This paper believes in the sentiments of Fullan (2014) who expressed that efficient leadership remains an important indicator of successful inclusive education implementation. He established that most of the leadership issues effecting inclusive education implementation are known but not sufficiently addressed in practice.

School Leadership and Inclusive Education

School leaders play a critical role in improving learning through four sets of leadership practices. First, they are expected to : set directions by building a shared vision, foster acceptance of group goals, create high performance expectations, and communicate direction. Second, they should develop staff by: providing individualized support and consideration, offering intellectual stimulation, and modelling appropriate values and practices. Thirdly, effective leaders must always seek to: refine and align their organizations when they build collaborative cultures, restructure the organization to support collaboration, build productive relationships with families and connect the school to the wider community. Finally, they are expected to improve the instructional program through practices that influence the nature and quality of instruction in classrooms (Leithwood & Jantzi, 2006). Leithwood and colleague



stress that school leaders can no longer function simply as school managers but also double up as instructional leaders (Ainscow & Sandill, 2010)

To be successful, they are also expected to distribute leadership effectively for sustainable educational change and improvement that translates into improved learning outcomes (Harris, 2014). This can be achieved through what Dufour and Marzano (2011) advocate; a shift in focus to efforts aimed at building the collective capacity of educators. The functions of the school leaders discussed above, do not directly address inclusive education but it can be assumed that leadership skills in the critical areas are helpful in leading inclusive schools. According to Guzman (1997) the core mandate of every school leader is to diagnose his or her particular school's needs and to meet these needs by utilizing the resources and talents available.

Purpose of The Study

The Special Needs Education Policy Frameworks (Republic of Kenya, 2009; 2012) embraces inclusive education as the viable option in enhancing education access, equity, quality, and relevance for all children in Kenya. The policy documents provide a comprehensive approach, including ways of providing an inclusive education of quality to all children, highlighting the need for teachers to be sensitive to each child's unique requirements, provide child-centred, socially relevant and equitable teaching/learning and understand the diversity in their social and cultural contexts. Based on these frameworks, huge resources (Republic of Kenya 2005a, 2005c, 2009, 2010, 2012) are channeled in enhancing capacities and developing training of school leaders and teachers.

Nonetheless, there seems to be insufficient specifics and less clarity on service delivery models. and the roles of stakeholders, including those of school leaders within the inclusive education framework. Policies acknowledge monumental challenges in the provision of inclusive education including; high pupil-teacher ratios, overcrowded classrooms, absenteeism, high drop-out rates, high repetition rates, increased number of orphans due to HIV and AIDS, inadequate infrastructural development, weak governance and financial management, inequitable deployment and weak management of teachers, and gender and regional disparities. However, concerns raised by stakeholders on what should be the unique competencies of school leaders in creating change within inclusive environment has not been given due attention.

Therefore, this theoretical review presents perspectives of different authors on the potential of transformative leadership ability of school leaders in offering a more inclusive, equitable, and deeply democratic conception of education. Specifically, the paper highlights transformative leadership practices of school leaders that are crucial for the implementation of this inclusive practice.

Theoretical Framework

This theoretical review is underpinned in the social model of disability which is a way of viewing the world, based on perspectives of disabled people. This approach sees disability as a concept that provides us with an opportunity for raising serious questions about the nature of the existing society we live in and the kind of society we desire or hope for. This is where the critical analysis has to focus and the changes have to take place. It recognizes the centrality of institutional, ideological, structural and material disabling barriers within society that is, systemic barriers, negative attitudes and exclusion by society (purposely or inadvertently) as the main contributory factor in disabling people.

The model says that people are disabled by barriers in society, not by their impairment or difference. They believe that unadaptive, unfriendly and hostile set of material conditions and social relations cumulatively contribute to the marginalisation, disempowerment and exclusion of disabled people. Barriers can be physical, like buildings not having accessible toilets or they can be caused by people's attitudes to difference, like assuming disabled people can't do certain things. The social model helps us recognize barriers that make life harder for disabled people and urges removal of these barriers to create equality and offer disabled people more independence, choice and control

Such an inclusive outlook permits stakeholders, especially school leaders - change makers, to give a holistic view of the education system by embracing inclusive philosophies and ideals of inclusion. This when they are likely to enable teachers and learners to feel comfortable with diversity, see it as a challenge and enrichment of the learning environment, rather than a problem, and significant of all, to take into consideration the concepts of least restrictive environment, home school, and education with peers as important aspects of special education. Figure 1 illustrates the social model of disability.



Figure 1. Social model of disability (Oliver, 2013).

Methodology

A search of the published literature for this review included several steps. First, personal inquiries and consultations were made with professionals with relevant research and practice interests that is transformative leadership and inclusive education. Second, articles, journals and government policy documents and scholarly research reports were reviewed, focusing transformative leadership and inclusive education. Third, relevant texts were searched for applicable information.

Finally, a site search was conducted on the World Wide Web of organizations, databases, references, and on-line publications. Data was collected and synthesized from these secondary sources pertaining to transformative leadership and inclusive education. Discussion of issues was bound within the social model of disability which sees an inclusive approach as one that permits a holistic review of the education system having a broader view of diversity as a challenge and enrichment of the learning environment, rather than a problem and takes into consideration the concepts of least restrictive environment, home school, and education with peers as important aspects of special education. The presentation was done thematically focusing on the key transformative leadership indicators that promotes inclusive education as discussed in subsequent chapters.

Discussions

Inclusion is a principle that is increasingly gaining attention in conversations about transformative education systems as one that cater for the diversity of students' learning needs and their individual characteristics such as learning motivations, abilities, styles and rhythm. The key element of inclusion is not individualization but the diversification of the educational provision and the personalization of common learning experiences in order to achieve the highest degree of participation of all students, taking into account their

individual needs.

This implies advancing towards universal design, where the teaching-learning process and the curriculum consider from the very beginning the diversity of needs of all students, instead of planning on the basis of an "average" student and then carry out individualized actions to respond to the needs of specific students or groups who were not taken into consideration by an education proposal based on a logic of homogeneity instead of diversity. The response to diversity, an essential condition to achieve high quality education, is probably the main challenge currently faced by schools and teachers, as it involves substantive changes in the existing conceptions, attitudes, curricula, pedagogical practices, teacher training, evaluation systems and school organization.

The role of the school leader is becoming critical in promoting the delivery of equitable education by teachers in an inclusive school classroom setting. First and foremost, it is imperative that the school leader: believes that outcomes can be equitable, whatever the individual starting points of their students, enthuses the staff and students to raise achievement in all students and measures the success of students by more than their academic achievement, School leaders should also be aware of the United Nations Charter on the Rights of the Child (1989), a significant driver for embracing diversity that legislates for every member state to provide education for all its children. It is the responsibility of a school leader to lead, promote and nurture inclusive attitudes and behaviours in your school community. This is possible by the school leaders with specific transformative skills.



School Leaders' Transformative Leadership Skills

Regardless of school type, schools need leadership in seven critical areas. One of these is in the area of instructional leadership, which entails assuring quality of instruction, modelling teaching practice, supervising curriculum, and assuring quality of teaching resources. The second area entails cultural leadership which is about tending to the symbolic resources of the school, for example, its traditions, climate, and history.

The third area is managerial leadership encompassing tending to the operations of the school such as its budget, schedule, facilities, safety and security. The other area is human resource leadership which is concerned with recruiting, hiring, firing, inducting, mentoring teachers and administrators; developing leadership capacity and professional development opportunities. The fourth one is strategic leadership which deals with promoting a vision, mission, goals, and developing a means to reach them.

External development is the fifth domain of representing the school in the community, developing capital, public relations, recruiting students, buffering and mediating external interests, and advocating for the school's interests and The last area is micro-political leadership which entails suffering and mediating internal interests; maximizing financial and human resources (Leithwood, Harris & Hopkins, 2008).

It is therefore, encouraging that a review of leadership literature indicates that the issue of inclusion is increasingly seen as a key challenge (West, Ainscow & Notman, 2003). It is argued, for example, that with increasingly diverse populations schools need to thrive on uncertainty, have a greater capacity for collective problem-solving, and be able to respond to a wider range of learners. This is only possible with school leaders with transformation outlook.

The most helpful theoretical and empirical leads, however, are provided by Riehl (2000) who concludes that school leaders need to attend to three broad types of task of fostering new meanings about diversity, promoting inclusive practices within schools and building connections between schools and communities. Riehl (2000) goes on to consider how these tasks can be accomplished, exploring how the concept of practice, especially discursive practice, can contribute to a fuller understanding of the work of school leaders. In her analysis she offers a positive view of the potential for leaders to engage in inclusive, transformative developments. She concludes:

When wedded to a relentless commitment to equity, voice, and social justice, administrators' efforts in the tasks of sensemaking, promoting inclusive cultures and practices in schools, and building positive relationships outside of the school may indeed foster a new form of practice. (Riehl, 2000, p. 71).

In support, Copland (2003) suggests, that enquiry can be the engine to enable the determination of leadership that is needed in order to foster participation in learning, and the glue that can bind a community together around a common purpose. From literature sources such as Leithwood, Harris and Hopkins (2008), the ensuing discussion identifies special abilities of school leaders that are associated with the success of schools in fostering the achievement of all their students, that is ability to : create inclusive cultures and ethos, develop strong desire for change, strive to build instructional teams and inclusive communities, appreciate active mentorship, embrace a clear philosophy and positive beliefs about inclusive education, nurture better instructional leadership and transformed school leaders and promote teachers learning and staff development as discussed below.

Create Inclusive Cultures and Ethos

School leaders set the ethos that either welcomes or sidelines disabled children and children with SEN; and they create a culture where parents are either confident to engage with the school or feel they are a nuisance (Lamb inquiry, 2009). Suffice to say, transformed school leaders who foster a sense of common purpose and are driven by a strong personal commitment to equal opportunities, seem to be remarkably successful in leading the whole school community – staff, students and parents – in ways that lead to a wholehearted commitment to the principle of educational inclusion. The strong sense of common purpose that provides the basis for the development of practices that take account of the learning of every student and manifested in visible efforts in establishing culture and ethos that emphasises the importance of respecting and responding positively to diversity in all senses.

Effective school leaders also go ahead to improve student learning by focusing on getting relationships right between themselves, their teachers, students and parents. They are culture builders (Halliger, 2010) who



influence the school community in embracing inclusive attitudes and mindsets. Precey (2008) assert that real and sustained change is achieved by changing the culture of the school, rather than by simply changing the structures of the way the school operates. This means school leaders must seek an understanding of schools' culture before leading.

They have to Instructional leaders are viewed as culture builders who foster high expectations and standards for students, as well as for teachers (Precey, 2008). They must also directly get involved in the teaching culture of the school, work directly with children and classroom teachers and base decisions on educational principles and values .

Develop Strong Desire for Change

Implementation of inclusive practices demand school leaders to take critical roles in providing a vision, leadership and administrative authority (Sergiovanni, 2009; Day & Leithwood, 2007) and challenge the norm of traditional approach to teaching, inspire a clear mutual vision of what the school should and could be and simultaneously, empower staff through cooperative team work (Ainscow & Sandill, 2010). This means the school leaders will first and foremost need to buy in to the philosophy of inclusion, followed by influencing the formation of a school vision that will direct the school towards embracing inclusive goals. They must also seek to reconstruct the school system and commit to the implementation of inclusive processes.

Build and Support Instructional or Inclusive Communities

School leaders can no longer function simply as school managers or as instructional leaders .To be successful in this front, they are expected to distribute leadership effectively for sustainable educational change and improvement that translates into improved learning outcomes (Rice, 2006). This can be achieved through what Dufour and Marzano (2011) advocate; a shift in focus to efforts aimed at building the collective capacity of educators.

Transformational leadership demands social skills of team building and inspiration without dominion. This can be evident in the way he/ she places lots of responsibilities on teams and team leaders. As for Halliger (2005) transformational leaders must not provide leadership alone but shares it with teachers. This model is grounded in understanding the needs of individual staff rather than coordinating and controlling them

towards the organizations desired ends.

As summarized by Kugelmass (2004), effective inclusive schools are characterized by coherent school cultures in which teachers and school leaders demonstrate high levels of personal responsibility and collective commitments that place students at the center of educational decision making. As a result, school leaders need to be committed to inclusive values and to a leadership style which encourages individuals to participate in leadership functions (Dyson, Polat, Hutcheson & Gallannaugh, 2004).

Practice Active Mentorship

Sugai, O'Keeffe, Horner & Lewis (2012), defines a mentor as a single person, whose basic function is to help a new leaders or subordinates. On one hand, Moir (2005), stresses that in promoting new innovation like inclusive, education mentors are important in decreasing the isolation of new teachers. When they guide them through their first year of teaching they can quickly get acquainted with their new environment. They do this by providing practical answers, 'posing important questions to prompt reflection, modelling teaching techniques, observing and offering feedback.

Have a Clear Philosophy and Positive Beliefs about Inclusive Education

One of the foundations for building an inclusive school is to believe that ALL children, regardless of their social, economic, emotional, physical or cognitive background have the ability to learn. In addition, adequate knowledge of inclusion and its processes can influence school leader's attitude and will determine the extent of the school's inclusive practices, regardless of the school context, the emphasis they place on teachers learning and the emphasis they place on the importance of a flexible curriculum.

The way a school leader constructs and employs certain leadership characteristics will depend on the changes that are taking place at the school at a given time, the school leaders knowledge regarding the change that needs to be implemented compared to his/ her teachers, and the school leader's ability to co-operate with others and build teaching teams. Moreover, strategies that can effectively facilitate teachers learning include school based collaboration, in-service training and mentorship. However, the strategies that school leaders will use to promote teachers learning will depend on the school's vision and its inclusive education context.



Demonstrate Strong Instructional Leadership

As instructional leaders, schools where leaders are expected to bring change (Webb, 2005). For this reason, instructional leadership would be appropriate in schools that need to accommodate inclusive changes as they promote instructional time, promote professional development; provide incentives for teachers as well as for learning (Halliger, 2000). At the same time, instructional leaders are considered to be 'strong directive leaders' (Halliger 2005) who act as the day to day manager of the school building, are responsible for timetabling teachers and evaluating them accordingly. This implies that when promoting inclusive practices, changes will be based on school and teacher evaluation. They must be well versed with curriculum and instruction, role models and who are not only familiar with the curriculum but also one who practice inclusion for LSN. Halliger, 2000) refers to instructional school leadership as an ability to be hands on, well versed with the curriculum instructions and standards set in the national curricular, knowledgeable about what is happening at the school, and one that evaluates teachers accordingly by providing feedback during meetings. It means that instructional leaders must work with their staff in formulating clear and measurable goals that are focused on the academic progress of students

Work To Transform Other School Leaders

The transformational leadership model enables meeting the current demand for innovation by empowering others through a distribution of leadership (Sergiovanni, 2009). They do not provide leadership alone (Halliger, 2010), instead they share their leadership responsibility with other teacher, providing leadership for inclusive change, uses the transformational leadership model to share leadership responsibilities with other teachers through delegation of responsibilities to team leaders.

They must be grounded in understanding the needs of individual teachers rather than controlling them to meet desired outcomes (Halliger, 2010) as they seek to influence people by building from the bottom-up rather than from the top down. In addition, they are motivated by the importance of individualized support, intellectual stimulation, and personal vision by supporting teachers through competence building that will enable them to create inclusive classrooms.

They are keen in encouraging collaboration to stimulate thinking and promote student learning, demands social skills of team building and inspiration without

dominion, concerned with modeling best practices and important organizational values, continuous professional development of teachers, shared decision making and leadership, experimentation, teacher reflection and building relationships with the school community. This is apparent as part of the responsibility to ensure that teachers are doing 'a good job' that will promote teaching and learning. Her managerial role is also reflected in the way she is involved in different teacher meetings to ensure that she is aware of what is happening in the school (Halliger, 2000).

Promote Teacher Learning and Staff Development

Promotion of teacher learning is important to the inclusion process as it will equip teachers in facilitating inclusive classrooms. Deppler (2010) reinforced the importance of teachers learning when he argued that improvement of schools will depend on the quality of teachers to meet inclusive challenges. It means then that transformative leaders must put more effort and resources to promote teachers learning. A number of strategies that can be used to motivate teachers may range from school based collaboration, working with the school community, training and mentorship.

Bubb & Early (2009) affirm that staff development which involves discussing, coaching, mentoring, observing and developing others is highly effective on matters inclusion. Therefore transformational leaders must always value teachers learning, but they show it in different ways. For instance, by making suggestions, giving feedback, providing modeling, using inquiry and solicit advice and opinions, and giving praise.

A similar study noted other six teacher development strategies that is, emphasizing the study of teaching and learning, supporting collaboration efforts among educators, developing coaching relationships among educators; encouraging and supporting redesign of programs; applying the principles of adult learning, growth and development to all phases of staff development; and implementing action research to inform instructional decision making.

Significant of all is that, is the development of intellectual, academic and professional capital (Sergiovanni, 2006) while empowering and supporting teachers as partners in decision making (Leithwood & Jantzi, 2006) because there is a thin line between what happens to teachers and what happens to students is direct (Sergiovanni, 2006). For example, little collaboration among teachers will result in little collaboration among students. Leithwood (2005) states that transformational



leaders help staff development by maintaining a collaborative professional school culture and involving staff in collaborative goal setting (Sergiovanni, 2009)

Conclusions

Inclusive education is 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. In spite of the dilemmas that are currently faced in inclusive schools, in many countries like Kenya, school leaders have a responsibility in ensuring that they provide a school for ALL children. School leaders will need to have inclusive attitudes which will entail an inclusive school vision.

Part of providing a school for ALL will also require school leaders to provide school leadership that will bring about inclusive changes; which will in turn affect the practices of classroom teachers. School leaders play an important role in motivating teachers to build inclusive classrooms and will need to influence and challenge teachers thinking by promoting inclusive cultures, in-service training, and enquiry and evidence based collaboration that will go beyond a mere transfer of knowledge to the acquisition of skills that will encourage, nurture and facilitate learning for ALL. Transformative leadership skills of school leadership is critical aspect to the successful implementation of inclusive education. This is particularly imperative considering that the overarching principle of inclusive education is that every child counts.

Recommendations

Inclusive education demands new skills and knowledge, not only for an individual teacher, but for the whole staff, as the whole school will need to be competent in order to make inclusion work. As a result, continuous staff development of teachers and all school leaders is crucial.

- a. A coordinated and multi-pronged action plan to spur requisite policy reforms, system alignments, and funding strategies in order to reframe school leadership development.
- b. Specifically, the Teachers' Service Commission and Ministry of Education, Science and Technology should collaboratively develop leadership standards for school leaders in order to spur improvements in leadership programmes' quality and effectiveness in inclusive settings.
- c. The County Education Committees should develop inclusive education indicators to be utilized when designing and implementing school development plans.
- d. Moreover, in order to model effective inclusive programmes and practices at least five model inclusive schools should be established in each Subcounty through a well-resourced programme implemented by respective Subcounty Education Committees. This may act as centers of excellence and models for what leadership models work for inclusive education.



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Author

¹ Rose Atieno Opiyo (ropiyo@mmust.ac.ke) is a Lecturer in the Department of Educational Psychology at Masinde Muliro University of Science and Technology, Kakamega, Kenya.

