

ABSTRACT

The Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR) in 1948 emphasizes on the right of every child to receive quality basic education. Furthermore UNESCO Salamanca Statement Framework for Action of 1994 emphasized on education for all disabled children, calling for inclusion to be the norm; and that schools should accommodate all children regardless of their physical, intellectual, social, emotional, linguistic or other conditions. This paper focuses on academic staff's (teaching staff) effectiveness in mainstreaming disability interventions for students with special needs in public universities in Kenya; a case of the University of Nairobi. University of Nairobi, as other public universities, has a disability mainstreaming policy, through which staff is being trained on matters of disability, in order to facilitate the needs of students with special needs; as reported in the Strategic Plan (2013 - 2018), whereby, 90% of the teaching staff were trained in pedagogical and andragogical skills. The question is, how many of the 90% trained teaching staff, were trained in disability skills, knowledge and attitudes? How many of those trained can effectively interact with students who have special needs in the teaching - learning process? Hence, this study examined capacity building initiatives; type of resources, content and methodologies that the academic staff utilizes when dealing with students with disability. A case study design was employed; and the study targeted students with special needs, at undergraduate level, dean of students, academic staff, chairpersons of departments, Registrars (academic and administration), dean of schools, and interpreters for the deaf students. Data collection instruments included interview schedules, observation schedules, questionnaires, and document analysis. The study found out that resources, facilities and infrastructure; teaching and learning methodologies, content preparation modes, lack of skills, attitudes knowledge in handling students with disabilities not only influenced academic staff effectiveness in mainstreaming disability interventions but also influenced learning outcomes among students with special needs. The study recommended a scheduled capacity building programme where academic staff is trained and sensitized on knowledge, skills and attitudes on how to teach assess and manage students with disability.