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Extensiveness of School Committees in Maintaining Infrastructure to Enhance Access to Education for Pupils with Special Education Needs in Public Primary Schools in Mvomero District, Tanzania

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Abstract: *This study examined the extensiveness of school committees in maintaining infrastructure to improve access to education for pupils with Special Educational Needs (SEN) in public primary schools in Mvomero District, Tanzania. It adopted a convergent mixed-methods design underpinned by Social Theory, involving 15 schools, 15 head teachers, 99 pupils, 158 teachers, and 136 school committee members. Data were collected through questionnaires, interviews, observations, and focus group discussions. Validity was ensured by MWECAU experts, while reliability was confirmed with Cronbach's Alpha of 0.931 (teachers) and 0.914 (committee members). Trustworthiness of qualitative data was achieved through triangulation. Analysis employed SPSS for descriptive statistics and thematic analysis for qualitative data. Ethical standards were observed through permits, anonymity, confidentiality, and informed consent. Findings revealed that committees maintained ramps and handrails, inspected infrastructure, allocated resources, and collaborated with parents. The study concluded that committees effectively maintained infrastructure, enhancing SEN access, and recommended continuous training in inclusive education and infrastructure standards.*

Key words: school committees, maintaining, infrastructure, access to education, pupils, special education needs, public primary schools

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INTRODUCTION

Inclusive school infrastructure is globally recognized as a foundational element for equitable access to education, especially for pupils with special educational needs. Ensuring quality basic education for all learners requires a comprehensive approach that prioritizes physically accessible learning environments, adequate classroom facilities, assistive devices, and inclusive design features such as ramps, widened doorways, accessible toilets, and learning aids (UNESCO, 2023). This aligns with Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 4, Target 4.a, which aims to build and upgrade education facilities that are child-, disability-, and gender-sensitive and provide safe, non-violent, inclusive, and effective learning environments for all (UN, 2015). School committees, serving as essential grassroots governance bodies, hold the responsibility for managing and maintaining school infrastructure to create conducive learning environments. Given that primary education is a pivotal stage in a child's educational development, the availability of appropriate infrastructure is vital for promoting learner participation and engagement. Inclusive school infrastructure includes not only physical adaptations but also accessible teaching and learning materials that enable equal learning opportunities (WHO, 2011). Despite global and national commitments, infrastructure problem still persists. This underscores the need to examine the extensiveness of school committees in maintaining inclusive infrastructure that enhances access to education for pupils with special education needs in public primary schools.

Globally, maintaining inclusive school infrastructure to enhance access to education for pupils with special education needs remains a major challenge. According to UNICEF (2020), over 60% of schools worldwide lack basic accessibility features such as ramps, accessible toilets, and assistive learning devices. Similarly, the Global Education Monitoring Report (2022) highlight that more than 150 million children with disabilities remain out of school, with inaccessible or poorly maintained infrastructure being a significant barrier. In low- and middle-income countries, 9 out of 10 children with disabilities are not enrolled in school, partly due to environments that do not accommodate their needs (UNESCO, 2019). In many contexts, school committees responsible for infrastructure maintenance face challenges such as limited funding, inadequate technical expertise, and poor monitoring systems, which hinder efforts to sustain safe and inclusive learning environments. These statistics highlight the critical role of school governance and management in ensuring that infrastructure maintenance supports equitable access to quality education for all learners.

In African countries, maintaining inclusive school infrastructure is a persistent and critical challenge that directly impacts access to education for pupils with disabilities. According to the World Bank, only 5–10% of children with disabilities in Africa have access to adequate learning facilities such as ramps, accessible toilets, and adaptive furniture necessary to facilitate their learning experience (Rivera & Kanu, 2023). The same report reveals that over half of children with moderate to severe disabilities in Africa are out of school, highlighting severe infrastructural and systemic barriers to inclusion. Data from a census-based study across 11 African countries indicate that primary completion rates are 10–13 percentage points lower for girls and boys with disabilities compared to their peers, and teachers frequently cite inadequate infrastructure as a major contributing factor to dropout (Engelbrecht, 2020). These challenges

persist despite national policies, due to limited funding for upgrading accessible environment, lack of technical know-how, and poor monitoring at the school level. As custodians of school facilities, school committees are essential to ensure regular maintenance and upgrades but their effectiveness is often limited by resource constraints and insufficient training (Crane et al., 2021). This situation underscores the need to investigate whether school committees maintain infrastructure to support inclusive education for pupils with special needs in African public primary schools.

In Tanzania, lack of inclusive infrastructure in public primary schools continues to hinder access to education for pupils with special education needs (SEN), despite supportive policy frameworks. With only 1,548 of over 17,000 schools equipped with basic accessibility features, many learners with disabilities remain marginalized (URT, 2022). Although the Education Act No. 25 of 1978 (as amended) and the 2023 revision of the Education and Training Policy mandate school committees to oversee inclusive facility planning and maintenance, implementation is weak due to limited technical capacity, inadequate funding, and minimal community involvement (MoEST, 2018; URT, 2023). While government partnerships with organizations like UNICEF and CBM have led to some progress in constructing accessible infrastructure, efforts remain fragmented and insufficient. Strengthening the capacity of school committees through targeted training, strategic resource allocation, and consistent monitoring is essential in ensuring that inclusive education is not just a policy aspiration but a practical reality for every learner.

Infrastructure plays a critical role in enhancing educational accessibility, particularly for learners with special educational needs, by providing barrier-free classrooms, adapted sanitation facilities, and mobility-enabling structures such as ramps and handrails. Comparative evidence from Kenya demonstrates that the absence of such infrastructure severely impedes inclusive education, limiting learner participation and academic attainment (Ohba & Malenya, 2022). In Tanzania, only 15% of children with disabilities are enrolled in school, with UNICEF (2021) attributing this to inaccessible infrastructure, limited resources, and negative societal attitudes. With policy commitments largely ignored at the ground level, school committees appear either under-equipped or unconcerned to their mandate. This study, therefore, wanted to critically examine how extensively school committees maintain inclusive infrastructure to enhance access to education for pupils with SEN in Mvomero District, Tanzania.

Statement of the Problem

Low access to education for pupils with Special Educational Needs (SEN) in public primary schools presents a persistent challenge in many areas of Tanzania, including Mvomero District. Despite efforts to strengthen inclusive education through the Education and Training Policy of 2014 (2023 edition) and support from various stakeholders, including NGOs, many pupils with SEN continue to experience exclusion from schooling due to stigma, discrimination, and harmful traditional beliefs (Revelian & Tibategeza, 2022; Stambuli & Tibategeza, 2022). According to Yusuph and Hussein (2022), 45.2 percent of parents opt not to enroll their children with SEN due to societal misconceptions, thereby denying them their right to education. Available evidence indicates that only 2.9 percent of children with SEN are enrolled in schools, with female pupils being particularly underrepresented (Mapunda et al., 2019). In addition, studies by Stambuli and Tibategeza (2022) and Paul et al. (2022) have revealed continuing

challenges such as negative attitudes, inadequate funding, limited facilities, lack of trained teachers, and weak collaboration between families and schools, all of which hinder access to education for children with SEN.

Despite ongoing government efforts and initiatives by education stakeholders, including school committees and parents, access to education for pupils with SEN remains restricted. However, none of the reviewed studies have examined the extent of school committees in maintaining infrastructure that supports access to education for pupils with SEN in public primary schools. If this situation remains unaddressed, pupils with SEN will continue to be deprived of their basic right to education, while those enrolled will remain disadvantaged due to unfriendly school environments. Therefore, the current study examined the extensiveness of school committees in maintaining infrastructure to enhance access to education for pupils with special educational needs in public primary schools in Mvomero District, Tanzania.

Research Question

This study is guided by the following research question;
To what extent does the maintenance of school infrastructure by school committees enhance access to education for pupils with special education needs in public primary schools in Mvomero district?

Significance of the Study

The findings of this study will be significant to head teachers, school committee members, teachers, pupils, policymakers, researchers and the theory. School committee members will be provided with understanding on effective strategies for improving access to education for pupils with Special Educational Needs, particularly in areas such as infrastructure maintenance, resource allocation, and community engagement. Teachers will benefit by identifying professional development needs that enable them to support inclusive practices in a better way. Pupils with Special Educational Needs will gain from improved learning environments that will foster greater participation and equity. Policymakers will receive evidence to guide planning and resource distribution aimed at strengthening inclusive education at the school level. The study will contribute to the advancement of the Social Model of Disability by demonstrating how school-level strategies can reduce systemic barriers to education. Lastly, this research will improve academic knowledge and the dissertation on inclusive education by focusing on the role of school committees, a critical yet underexplored area in the Tanzanian context.

Theoretical Framework

This study is guided by the Social Theory of Disability developed by Mike Oliver (1983). The theory suggests that disability is not solely a result of an individual's physical or mental impairments but is primarily created by the way society is organized, particularly through structural, attitudinal, and environmental barriers (Goodley, 2021). These systemic obstacles hinder the full participation of persons with disabilities in key social areas, including education. In relation to the study titled "Extensiveness of School Committees in maintaining infrastructure to Enhance Access to Education for Pupils with Special Education Needs in Public Primary Schools in Mvomero District, Tanzania," the Social Theory of Disability provides a relevant framework to evaluate the role of school committees in either perpetuating

or addressing educational barriers. It emphasizes the importance of school-level strategies in transforming school environments, policies, and cultural attitudes to promote inclusion (Shakespeare, 2014).

The main strength of the theory lies in its ability to shift attention from individual impairments to societal shortcomings in accommodating diversity (Myhr & Ekmann, 2023). This approach allows the study to discover how school committee strategies contribute to the removal of barriers such as inaccessible infrastructure, negative attitudes, and a lack of teacher training, therefore supporting inclusive education and equal access for all learners. However, the theory focuses on social transformation; it may underestimate the necessity of tailored interventions, therapies, or medical support for pupils with more profound needs (Römhild & Hollederer, 2023). This limitation could lead to an incomplete understanding of the effectiveness of school committee strategies if such supports are not considered.

In this study, the Social Theory of Disability is applied to analyze whether the strategies employed by school committees in Mvomero District effectively eliminate systemic barriers to educational access. It guides the investigation into how committees may facilitate inclusive infrastructure, improve teacher preparedness, and influence social norms that affect the participation of pupils with special education needs. This framework supports the identification of institutional changes required to ensure all pupils are equitably included in the education system (Oliver & Barnes, 2012).

Empirical Review

The empirical studies are organized thematically, grounded on the research question and include global, African, East African, Tanzanian, and local context studies. They provided the researcher with a thorough understanding of the problem, data collection and analysis techniques and research methods.

The extent to which Maintenance of School Infrastructure by School Committees enhances access to Education for Pupils with Special Education Needs in primary schools

The School Committees play a major role in ensuring the presence of school infrastructure that may enhance access to education for pupils with special education needs in inclusive education. Providing supportive buildings such as classrooms, toilets, libraries, and computer rooms can help provide access to education for pupils with special needs.

Göransson and Nilholm (2021) explored how school committees in Sweden promote inclusive education and integrate pupils with special needs into mainstream classrooms. Using a qualitative research design, data were collected through interviews with 12 school leaders from various regions. The findings highlight efforts to construct inclusive classrooms, toilets, and playgrounds and allocate resources to support pupils with disabilities. However, the study findings have little information based on other potentially critical aspects, such as accessibility within school buildings to support inclusive education. Building on this, the current study examined how school committees in the Mvomero district ensure that infrastructure enhances access to education for pupils with special needs in public primary schools.

Sijuola (2022) conducted the study on infrastructure deficiencies in Nigerian schools, emphasizing that poorly maintained facilities, lack of ramps, accessible classrooms andproper sanitation facilities hinder children with disabilities from attending school. Using a qualitative research design, the study involved interviews with 12 head teachers, 28 parents, and 2 policymakers. Key challenges identified include inadequate infrastructure and negative attitudes towards pupils with special needs, which limit their enrollment. However, the study by Sijuola (2022) centers on school managers and infrastructure, but it doesn't examine deeply on the specific roles and influence of school committees. The current study brought an understanding of how selected school committees' roles contribute to the access to education for pupils with special education needs. In this regard, the new exploration looks at the extent school committees ensure the presence of school infrastructure that enhances access to education for pupils with special education needs in public primary schools in the Mvomero district.

Abdulrauf et al. (2021) examined the role of school managers in mobilizing resources for constructing facilities for pupils with special needs in Nigeria. Using a qualitative approach, the study involved interviews with school managers, focus group discussions with parents, 6 school committee members, and 120 pupils with disabilities. Findings revealed that school managers had limited involvement due to resource constraints and insufficient government support. The study emphasized the need for stronger government backing and better collaboration among stakeholders. However, the study findings have not included adequate information about prepared school infrastructure that enhances access to education for pupils with Special education needs in the context of Nigeria. Abdulrauf et al. (2021) focus on the role of school managers in mobilizing resources for the construction of facilities for pupils with special needs. The investigation on how school committees, which include parents, community members, and other stakeholders, maintain accessible infrastructure for pupils with special education needs was not under his concern. Therefore, the current study gathered information about the extent school committees ensure the presence of school infrastructure that enhances access to education for pupils with special education needs in public primary schools in Mvomero district.

The study conducted by Long'ore and Mwanza (2023) examined the impact of physical facilities and instructional materials on access to education for learners with special needs in public primary schools in Machakos Sub-County. The sample included 80 teachers, three head teachers, and one curriculum support officer was selected. Data collection involved the use of questionnaires for teachers, an interview schedule for head teachers, and the curriculum support officer for special needs education. The study concluded that the majority of public primary school facilities were unsuitable for accommodating learners with special needs and that inclusive schools lacked infrastructure tailored to cater to such learners. Machakos Sub-County in Kenya and Mvomero district share some regional similarities in East Africa, making the findings potentially more relevant compared to studies from vastly different contexts. However, local specifics in educational policy, economic conditions, and cultural attitudes towards disability may differ. Therefore, the current study investigated the extent school committees ensure the presence of school infrastructure that enhances access to education for pupils with special education needs in public primary schools in Mvomero district.

Yusuph and Hussein (2022) conducted the study on educational leaders' enrollment Disparities of Pupils with Disabilities in Tanzania public Schools. Documentary analysis and interview methods were used to collect information. The participants were special needs educators and pupils from public schools and universities. The findings reveal disparities in enrollment of pupils with disabilities as they advance from lower to higher levels of schooling. The analysis shows that the smaller number of pupils with disabilities in the schooling system was attributed to poor school infrastructures, a lack of awareness among parents on the educational services provided to children with disabilities, traditional beliefs, poverty, stigma, and harassment. The analysis further shows that, shortage of qualified teachers and unsupported inclusive classrooms were among many obstacles facing pupils with disabilities in schools. The study identifies poor school infrastructure as a key factor contributing to enrollment disparities. However, the detailed insights into specific infrastructural elements, including classrooms, toilets, and playgrounds, which are crucial to inform the preparedness of school committees, were out of his concerns. Therefore, the current study investigated the extent school committees ensure the presence of school infrastructure that enhances access to education for pupils with special education needs in public primary schools in Mvomero district.

Summary of Literature Review and Research Gaps

The reviewed empirical studies on infrastructure support for pupils with special educational needs highlight several gaps at the conceptual, contextual, and methodological levels. Studies from Sweden and Nigeria (Göransson & Nilholm, 2021; Sijuola, 2022; Abdulrauf et al., 2021) emphasize the role of school managers in infrastructure development but pay limited attention to the involvement of school committees, revealing a conceptual gap. Similarly, research conducted in Kenya and Tanzania (Long'ore & Mwanza, 2023; Yusuph & Hussein, 2022) confirms persistent infrastructure challenges but lacks a specific focus on strategies led by school committees, indicating a contextual and knowledge gap relevant to the Tanzanian setting. Methodological gaps have been revealed by most studies that employed qualitative designs and did not capture the diverse perspectives of various stakeholders. This study will address these gaps by examining the extent to which school committees in Mvomero District facilitate inclusive infrastructure to enhance access to education for pupils with special educational needs, employing a broader approach to stakeholder involvement and mixed methods to enrich understanding and applicability.

DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

The study engaged a convergent research design under a mixed methods approach. The convergent design involved the simultaneous gathering and analysis of quantitative and qualitative data, allowing for a broad understanding of the phenomenon under investigation. The study focused on collecting data at different points and employed multiple data collection methods to collect information from respondents. Quantitative and qualitative data sets were collected simultaneously, analyzed separately, and then compared to determine whether the findings aligned or contradicted each other (Creswell & Creswell, 2018).

The target population included 151 public primary schools, 151 head teachers, 80,854 pupils with and without special education needs, 1,577 teachers, and 1,359 school committee members (URT, 2023). The sample size comprised 15 public primary schools, 15 head teachers,

99 pupils, 158 teachers, and 136 school committee members. Quantitative data were collected through questionnaires, whereas qualitative data were gathered using interview guides, observation guides and focus group discussion guides. The data collection instruments were validated by research experts from Mwenge Catholic University specializing in education planning and administration. A pilot study was conducted in two public primary schools. The reliability of the questionnaires for Likert-type items was estimated using Cronbach's Alpha Coefficient, which yielded values of 0.931 for teachers and 0.914 for school committee members. Trustworthiness for qualitative data was established through triangulation. Quantitative data were analyzed using descriptive statistics with SPSS software version 27, while qualitative data were analyzed thematically through familiarization, coding, theme generating and reviewing, theme definition and naming, and final write-up.

Findings in Respect of the Themes from Research Questions

This study was conducted to answer one research question on the extensiveness of school committees in maintaining access to education for pupils with Special Educational Needs in public primary schools in Mvomero District, Tanzania. The study gathered information from teachers, head teachers, members of the school committee, pupils and DPEO. The findings were presented and discussed under one theme of the research question.

The Extent of Maintenance of School Infrastructure by School Committee Access to Education for Pupils with Special Education Needs in Primary Schools in Mvomero District, Tanzania

This objective study aimed to investigate the extent maintenance of school infrastructure by school committee enhances access to education for pupils with special education needs in primary schools. To recognize the concern, the information needed was obtained by the researcher through questionnaire items provided to teachers and members of the school committee to indicate the level of agreement with the given statement, while the head teachers and DPEO were interviewed and focus group discussion guide was administered to Pupils with and without special needs. The five-level Likert scale was employed to make the unit of analysis, in which 1=Very Low Extent (VLE), 2=Low Extent (LE), 3=Moderate (M), 4=High Extent (HE), 5=Very High Extent (VHE), F=frequencies, P=Percentages. According to Hashim et al., (2022) provide the interpretation of the mean score whereby 1.00-1.89 indicates very low extent, 3.50-4.29 indicates a high extent and 4.30-5.00 indicates very high extent. The rate of percentage described as ≤ 20=extreme minority; 21-49= minority; 50-59=moderate; 60-69= majority; 70-89= very high majority; 90-99=extreme majority; 100= overwhelming majority (Taherdoost, 2019). Responses for teachers are summarized in Table 1

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Table 1:
Teachers (TRs)and Members of the School Committee (MSCs) responses on the Extent Maintenance of School Infrastructure by School Committee Access to Education for Pupils with Special Education Needs in Primary Schools in Mvomero District, Tanzania (n=151 and 126)

S/N	Statement	Resp.	VLE		LE		ME		HE		VHE		Mean
			f	%	f	%	f	%	f	%	f	%	
1	Prioritizing maintenance of ramps, handrails by the school committee facilitates access to education for pupils with disabilities	TRs	5	3.3	27	17.9	22	14.6	81	53.6	16	10.6	3.5
		MSC	6	4.8	21	16.7	19	15.1	63	50	17	13.5	3.51
2	Active involvement of experts in maintaining infrastructure enhances access for pupils with special education needs.	TRs	2	1.3	23	15.2	21	13.9	81	53.6	24	15.9	3.68
		MSC	5	4	21	16.7	16	12.7	64	50.8	20	15.9	3.58
3	Regular inspection and repair of infrastructure to ensure it meets the needs of pupils with special educational needs promotes their access to education.	TRs	5	3.3	19	12.6	26	17.2	66	43.7	35	23.2	3.71
		MSC	5	4	22	17.5	20	15.9	54	42.9	25	19.8	3.57
4	Advocacy for policy support by the school committee improves school infrastructure for inclusive education.	TRs	4	2.6	20	13.2	33	21.9	56	37.1	38	25.2	3.69
		MSC	10	7.9	17	13.5	16	12.7	62	49.2	21	16.7	3.53
5	Allocation of sufficient resources for the maintenance of specialized equipment enhances access for pupils with special education needs.	TRs	9	6	19	12.6	27	17.9	54	35.8	42	27.8	3.67
		MSC	8	6.3	15	11.9	21	16.7	49	38.9	33	26.2	3.67
6	A close work relationship between the school committee and parents/guardians supports the needs of pupils with disabilities.	TRs	5	3.3	16	10.6	24	15.9	66	43.7	40	26.5	3.79
		MSC	7	5.6	13	10.3	14	11.1	55	43.7	37	29.4	3.81
7	Adaptive classrooms/learning environments enhance pupils with disabilities' access to education.	TRs	5	3.3	12	7.9	20	13.2	67	44.4	47	31.1	3.92
		MSC	5	4	15	11.9	18	14.3	50	39.7	38	30.2	3.8
8	Regular updates of school infrastructure make it more accessible and promote education for pupils with disabilities.	TRs	6	4	18	11.9	20	13.2	68	45	39	25.8	3.77
		MSC	11	8.7	17	13.5	14	11.1	52	41.3	32	25.4	3.61
9	Encourages teachers and staff to identify areas for infrastructural improvements, enhancing learning for pupils with disability.	TRs	0	0	19	12.6	26	17.2	68	45	38	25.2	3.83
		MSC	4	3.2	12	9.5	16	12.7	57	45.2	37	29.4	3.88
10	Establishing a budget specifically for maintaining infrastructure that facilitates inclusion enhances education access for pupils with special education needs.	TRs	5	3.3	19	12.6	27	17.9	67	44.4	33	21.9	3.69
		MSC	8	6.3	14	11.1	24	19	59	46.8	21	16.7	3.56
	Grand Mean												**3.68**

Source: Field Data (2025) 1=Very Low Extent (VLE), 2= Low Extent (LE), 3=Moderate (M), 4=High Extent (HE), 5=Very High Extent (VHE), F=frequencies, P=Percentages

Data in Table 1 shows that the majority (64.2%) of teachers and (63.5%) of school committee members rated to a high and very high extent that prioritizing the maintenance of ramps and

handrails by the school committee facilitates access to education for pupils with disabilities. In contrast, an extreme minority of teachers (21.2%) and school committee members (21.5%) rated this to a very low and low extent. Additionally, an extreme minority of teachers (14.6%) and school committee members (15.1%) indicated a moderate extent. The mean score is 3.5 for teachers and 3.51 for school committee members, implying that most teachers and school committee members recognize the importance of maintaining ramps and handrails in promoting access to education for pupils with disabilities. This suggests that both groups believe these infrastructural elements play a crucial role in supporting inclusive education. The study, during a face-to-face interview with the Head Teacher, HT5, had this to say;

> Yes, maintaining ramps and handrails is important. When the school committee gives it priority, pupils with disabilities move around more freely and attend class regularly. But the truth is, this is not always seen as urgent. Sometimes other needs like textbooks or classroom repairs take precedence (HT5 Personal communication, 24th March 2025).

Head Teacher 2 had the following comments;

> I agree it helps a lot. Last time we repaired a broken handrail, one of our pupils who uses crutches started coming to school more often. But it's not always easy to convince the committee; it's like they wait until someone complains before acting (HT2 Personal communication, 13 March 2025).

Information from the interviews indicates that both head teachers acknowledge the importance of maintaining ramps and handrails to support pupils with disabilities. HT5 notes the positive impact but highlights how accessibility is sometimes deprioritized. HT2 affirms the benefit, while pointing out delays in action by school committees. This suggests that consistent prioritization is needed to ensure inclusive access. The findings of the study are in line with those by Sijuola (2022), who pointed out that poorly maintained facilities as one of the factors that significantly hinder children with disabilities from accessing education. Ensuring the maintenance of ramps and handrails in schools is essential for facilitating access to education for pupils with disabilities; as such, infrastructure directly reduces barriers and supports inclusion.

During focus group discussions, Pupils with and without special education needs responded as follows when asked about how repairing ramps and handrails helps pupils with disabilities to get an education more easily. One pupil from FGD 1 explained,

> "Our school has ramps towards some classrooms. When the ramp was broken, and to the classrooms where ramps are not yet fixed, my friend, who uses a wheelchair, could not come to class. But when they fixed it, now he comes every day." Another pupil from FGD 3 said, "I use the handrail when going to the toilet because I don't walk fast like others. If the handrail is not strong, I get scared. So it's good that the school makes it strong." A pupil without SEN from FGD1 added, "My brother is in Class IV and he can't walk well. He used to miss school before the ramp was made good. Now he comes every day."(FGDG1, 17 March 2025).

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The study during observation in school K, following the observation guide, noted a pupil with physical disability who could move around the school with her wheelchair chair but when entering classrooms with no ramp, had to be lifted by her fellows. This is indicated by the pictures in Figure 1.

Figure 1: Pupils with Physical Disability Struggle to Enter the Classroom due to the Absence of Ramps

The response indicates that pupils understand how repairing ramps and handrails makes it easier for those with disabilities to access education. When such facilities are maintained, pupils with physical difficulties are able to attend school regularly, feel safe, and move independently. The findings also align with the Social Theory of Disability, which emphasizes that disability is not caused solely by an individual's physical or mental impairments, but rather by the societal barriers that hinder full participation. In the context of school committees prioritizing the maintenance of ramps and handrails, this action directly addresses one of the key doctrine of the theory that the environment must be modified to remove disabling barriers. By ensuring that these physical structures are well-maintained, schools facilitate mobility and independence for pupils with disabilities.

Data in Table 1 shows that a majority of teachers (69.5%) and school committee members (66.7%) rated to a high and very high extent that actively involving experts in infrastructure maintenance enhances access to education for pupils with special education needs. Extreme minority of teachers (16.5%) and a minority of school committee members (20.7%) rated this to a very low and low extent. Additionally, an extreme minority of teachers (13.9%) and school committee members (12.7%) indicated a moderate extent. The mean score is 3.68 for teachers

and 3.58 for school committee members. This implies that teachers and school committee members recognize the value of expert involvement in maintaining infrastructure that supports inclusive education. The responses suggest confidence in the professional capacity of experts to improve learning environments for pupils with special needs. The minority and extreme minority responses reflect a small group that are less aware of or convinced by the potential benefits of expert-led maintenance. The mean scores reinforce overall approval of expert involvement in promoting accessible education. The researcher, during a face-to-face interview with the Head Teacher, HT1, had this to share:

> Involving experts makes a big difference. They know the standards and what adjustments are truly needed for pupils with special needs. We once had a local technician build a ramp, but it was too steep and slippery. Later, an expert from the district helped us redesign it properly. The challenge is funding; we don't always have the budget to hire professionals (HT1 Personal communication, 10 March 2025).

Head Teacher 3 had this to speak:

> Experts are helpful, yes, but not always available. Sometimes we rely on local funds is because they're cheaper and readily around. But I must admit, the quality isn't always what's needed. If we had regular support from people trained in inclusive infrastructure, I believe access for our special needs pupils would improve a lot (HT3 Personal communication, 17 March 2025).

Information from both HT1 and HT3 recognizes the value of involving qualified experts in maintaining school infrastructure to support pupils with special education needs. HT1 emphasizes the practical benefits of expert input, especially in correcting previous poor construction, but highlights budget constraints. Similarly, HT3 acknowledges the benefit of involving qualified expertise but points out reliance on local workers due to limited resources. These views suggest that while expert involvement improves accessibility, consistent support and funding are necessary to make it sustainable. The findings of the study align with those by Long'ore and Mwanza (2023), who concluded that most public primary school facilities were unsuitable for learners with special needs, pointing to a lack of regular maintenance. Regular inspection and timely repair of infrastructure help ensure safety, accessibility, and continuous support for pupils with disabilities in inclusive settings.

Data in Table 1 shows that a majority of teachers (66.9%) and school committee members (62.7%) rated to a high and very high extent that regular inspection and repair of infrastructure promotes access to education for pupils with special educational needs. An extreme minority of teachers (15.9%) and a minority of school committee members (21.5%) rated this to a very low and low extent. Additionally, an extreme minority of teachers (17.2%) and school committee members (15.9%) indicated a moderate extent. The mean score is 3.71 for teachers and 3.57 for school committee members, indicating that most teachers and school committee members believe that consistent infrastructure maintenance plays a vital role in ensuring access to education for pupils with special needs. The majority rating highlights a shared understanding of the need for regular maintenance to maintain an inclusive environment. The minority and extreme minority responses point to a smaller group that places less emphasis on

maintenance as a key factor. The mean scores suggest a favorable view toward the strategy overall. During a face-to-face interview with the Head Teacher, HT5 said the following:

> Regular inspection is very important. Sometimes damage to a ramp or toilet door may seem small, but for a pupil with special needs, it can be a big barrier. When we inspect regularly, we catch these problems early. But honestly, inspections are not always done as planned. Other duties come up, and without reminders or pressure from higher levels, it's easy to postpone them (HT5 Personal communication, 24 March 2025).

Head Teacher 6 added the following:

> It helps when inspections are done routinely. Last term, we noticed a loose floor tile near the classroom used by a pupil with a walking aid. It was fixed quickly before it caused an accident. But the problem is consistency. Sometimes we go months without checking. And when there's no clear follow-up, some issues just stay unresolved (HT6 Personal communication, 27 March 2025).

Information from the interviews shows that both HT5 and HT6 recognize the role of regular infrastructure inspections and repairs in improving access for pupils with special educational needs. HT5 stresses that small damages can pose major challenges and emphasizes the value of early detection, though noting that inspections often get sidelined. HT6 supports this, citing a positive case but also acknowledging lapses in consistency. This suggests that while regular inspection is beneficial, its effectiveness depends on routine implementation and follow-up action. The findings of the study correspond with those by Göransson and Nilholm (2021), who highlighted the efforts of school leaders in Sweden to promote inclusive learning environments through resource allocation and infrastructure development. Advocacy for inclusive policy support helps strengthen infrastructure readiness and broaden educational access for pupils with special needs.

During focus group discussions, pupils with and without special educational needs responded as follows when asked about how regular inspection and repair of school infrastructure helps pupils with special educational needs to get an education more easily. One pupil said, "*Sometimes the toilet door gets stuck, and my friend who uses crutches can't open it. But when teachers check and fix it, he can use it easily*." A pupil with special education needs said, *"I don't walk fast like others. When the path is rough or broken, I get tired and fall. But when the school fixes the way, I feel happy and can go to class alone." (FGDG3, 20 March 2025).* The response indicates that some pupils understand how regular inspection and repair of school infrastructure supports learning for children with special education needs. When the school environment is safe, clean, and easy to move around, pupils with physical or learning difficulties attend school more comfortably and independently. This shows that regular maintenance creates a better and more inclusive learning space for all pupils.

Pupils' responses were aligned with the researcher's observation in school M, which had a rough environment which is not easily accessible to pupils with special educational needs. This advocates that although regular inspection of infrastructure is helpful to pupils with SEN, the

routine implementation and follow-up action is sometimes delayed in some schools. See figure 2.

Figure 2: Pupils with Physical Disability Struggle to Enter in the Classroom due to the Absence of Ramps

Data in Table 1 shows that a very high majority of teachers (62.3%) and school committee members (65.9%) rated to a high and very high extent that advocacy for policy support by the school committee improves school infrastructure for inclusive education. An extreme minority of teachers (15.8%) and a minority of school committee members (21.4%) rated this to a very low and low extent. Additionally, a minority of teachers (21.9%) and an extreme minority of school committee members (12.7%) indicated a moderate extent. The mean score is 3.69 for teachers and 3.53 for school committee members. This implies that teachers and school committee members acknowledge the importance of policy advocacy in supporting inclusive infrastructure development. The very high majority response reflects the perceived effectiveness of school committees in influencing policy that benefits learners with special needs. The minority and extreme minority responses suggest that stakeholders see limited immediate outcomes from such advocacy efforts. The mean scores indicate a generally supportive policy advocacy in supporting inclusive infrastructure development.

During a face-to-face interview with the Head Teacher, HT7 had the following to comment;

> Advocacy is very important. When the school committee pushes for policy support, especially from the district level, things start to move. Last year, they wrote a letter to the ward office requesting funds to fix the toilets and add handrails, and it was approved. But the problem is, such efforts are not regular. Sometimes, the committee members feel they don't have the power to influence higher authorities (HT7 Personal communication, 28 March 2025).

Head Teacher declared the following:

> I think it works, but only if the committee is serious and active. In our case, we have a few members who are passionate, and they've managed to get attention from the council on several issues, including building accessible classrooms for children with special needs. The downside is that some members don't attend meetings, and without unity, the advocacy becomes weak (HT8 Personal communication, 3 April 2025).

The interviews with HT7 and HT8 reveal that advocacy by the school committee expressively improves infrastructure for inclusive education when it is consistent and well-coordinated. HT7 highlights a successful example of policy-level engagement but also points out a lack of confidence among committee members on improving infrastructure for inclusive education. HT8 affirms the impact of dedicated individuals within the committee but notes that a lack of full participation undermines advocacy efforts. Both responses suggest that strong, united, and proactive school committees are key to effective policy support for inclusive infrastructure. The findings of the study are consistent with those by Göransson and Nilholm (2021), who reported that creating inclusive classrooms was central to integrating pupils with special needs into mainstream education. Adaptive learning environments play a critical role in accommodating diverse needs and ensuring pupils with disabilities can effectively participate in the learning process.

Data in Table 1 shows that a majority of both teachers (63.6%) and (65.1%) of school committee members rated to a high and very high extent that allocating sufficient resources for the maintenance of specialized equipment enhances education access for pupils with special education needs. An extreme minority of teachers (18.6%) and school committee members (18.2%) rated this to a very low and low extent. Additionally, an extreme minority of teachers (17.9%) and school committee members (16.7%) indicated a moderate extent. The mean score is 3.67 for both teachers and school committee members. This implies that teachers and school committee members recognize the importance of adequate funding for the maintenance of specialized learning equipment. The majority rating underscores the belief that such equipment is vital for inclusion. The extreme minority responses reflect a small group that may not view resource allocation as a top priority or may see challenges in sustaining funding. The mean scores demonstrate overall agreement with the strategy.

During a face-to-face interview with the Head Teacher, HT4 had this to say:

> Specialized equipment like hearing aids, Braille machines, and adaptive furniture really supports learning for pupils with special needs. But these tools break down easily if not maintained. When the school allocates a clear budget for this, we avoid interruptions in learning. The problem is, in many cases, such equipment is seen as a luxury, not a priority, especially when funds are tight (HT4 Personal communication, 20 March 2025).

Head Teacher 9 had this argument:

> Yes, allocating resources makes a big difference. In our school, we had a case where a visually impaired pupil couldn't use the Braille typewriter for weeks because there were no funds to fix it. It affected her progress. But once we set aside a small amount specifically for such maintenance, things improved. Still, not all members of the school committee see the urgency until it becomes a crisis (HT9 Personal communication, 09 April 2025).

The responses from head teachers indicate that allocating sufficient resources for the maintenance of specialized equipment is essential to ensure uninterrupted learning for pupils with special education needs. HT4 stresses the educational value of such tools and lamented that they are often not prioritized in budget decisions. Similarly, HT9 shared a real example of how a lack of timely maintenance negatively impacted a pupil, but also notes improvement once funds were deliberately set aside. Both responses suggest that proactive budgeting for specialized equipment maintenance is a key to enhancing inclusive education. The findings of the study align with those by Long'ore and Mwanza (2023), who found that infrastructure in many schools, remained outdated and unfit for learners with special needs. Regular infrastructure updates are necessary to maintain accessibility standards and create supportive learning conditions for pupils with disabilities. The findings match with Social Theory of Disability which views disability as a result of societal barriers rather than individual impairments. In the context of public primary schools in Mvomero District, allocating sufficient resources for maintaining specialized equipment such as Braille tools and hearing aids helps remove environmental barriers that restrict access to education. By ensuring the availability and functionality of these resources, school committees create inclusive learning environments that enable pupils with special education needs to participate equally. This supports the theory's emphasis on institutional responsibility in promoting equity and inclusion.

Data in Table 1 shows that a very high majority of both teachers (70.2%) and (73.1%) of school committee members rated close collaboration between the school committee and parents/guardians to a high and very high extent that supports the needs of pupils with disabilities. An extreme minority of teachers (13.9%) and school committee members (15.9%) rated this to a very low and low extent. Additionally, an extreme minority of teachers (15.9%) and school committee members (11.1%) indicated a moderate extent. The mean score is 3.79 for teachers and 3.81 for school committee members implies that most teachers and school committee members see parental involvement as a key factor in addressing the needs of pupils with disabilities. The very high majority ratings reflect strong confidence in collaborative approaches. The extreme minority responses represent a small group that may perceive limited effectiveness in such partnerships. The mean scores reinforce the view that engaging families is an important strategy for inclusive education.

During a face-to-face interview with the Head Teacher, HT3 had this to comment:

> It's true that when the school committee works closely with parents, things move better for pupils with disabilities. Parents know the specific needs of their children, and they can guide the school on what helps or doesn't. We had a case where a parent suggested using visual aids for a child with hearing difficulties it worked well. But honestly, not all parents are willing to participate. Some are too busy or think it's the school's job alone (HT3 Personal communication, 17 March 2025).

The District Primary Education Officer (DPEO) had this to say:

> Yes, collaboration is essential. When parents and the school committee are on the same page, pupils with disabilities benefit a lot, be it in accessing resources, emotional support, or adapting learning materials. But in some schools, this cooperation is still

> weak. Some committee members don't engage parents regularly, and some parents feel intimidated or unaware of how they can help. We need more awareness and openness to bridge that gap (DPEO Personal communication, 11 March 2025).

The statements from HT3 and the DPEO highlight that the strong collaboration between school committees and parents plays a vital role in addressing the needs of pupils with disabilities. HT3 gives an example of positive parent input improving learning support. The DPEO emphasizes the value of joint efforts but points to weak engagement and communication barriers in some schools. These insights suggest that improving awareness and fostering inclusive dialogue are key to strengthening support for pupils with disabilities. The findings of the study are in agreement with those by Göransson and Nilholm (2021), who noted that allocating resources for inclusive infrastructure supports the integration of pupils with special needs. Dedicated budgeting ensures that inclusive infrastructure is not only constructed but also sustainably maintained to enhance long-term access.

During focus group discussions, pupils responded as follows when asked about how close collaboration between the school committee and parents or guardians supports the needs of pupils with disabilities. One pupil said, *"My mother went to school to tell the teachers that I need help carrying my books. Now the teacher asked another pupil to help me every day."* Another pupil with special needs shared, *"My father talked to the head teacher about fixing the toilet because I use a wheelchair. After that, the school made a bigger door for me." (FGDG2, 18 March 2025).* These responses indicate that pupils' recognition of the importance of teamwork between parents or guardians and the school committee. When they talk and plan together, pupils with disabilities receive the support they need at school. This helps them to learn better, feel cared for, and enjoy being in school just like other children. The findings also align with Mike Oliver's Social Theory of Disability (1983), which asserts that disability arises from societal barriers rather than individual impairments. This partnership fosters shared responsibility, promotes inclusive decision-making, and creates supportive environments. According to Oliver's theory, such collaboration shifts focus from the child's limitations to structural changes, enhancing access and participation for pupils with special needs.

Data in Table 1 shows that a very high majority of teachers (75.5%) and a majority of school committee members (69.9%) rated to a high and very high extent that adaptive classrooms enhance access to education for pupils with disabilities. An extreme minority of teachers (11.2%) and school committee members (15.9%) rated this to a very low and low extent. Additionally, an extreme minority of teachers (13.2%) and school committee members (14.3%) indicated a moderate extent. The mean score is 3.92 for teachers and 3.8 for school committee members. This implies that most teachers and school committee members believe that adaptable classroom environments are effective in promoting access for pupils with disabilities. The very high majority response indicates strong support for inclusive design practices. The extreme minority ratings suggest that a few may not yet be convinced of the impact or may prioritize other interventions. The high mean scores demonstrate that overall endorsement of adaptive classrooms enhances access to education for pupils with disabilities.
During a face-to-face interview with the Head Teacher, HT6 had this to remark:

> Adaptive classrooms are very important. When the layout is spacious and desks are arranged to accommodate wheelchairs or other assistive devices, pupils with disabilities

> participate more freely. We once adjusted one room by lowering the chalkboard and creating wider paths between desks; it made a huge difference. But these modifications take time and resources, and sometimes teachers are not trained on how to use the space effectively (HT6 Personal communication, 27 March 2025).

Head Teacher 7 had this to state:

> Adaptive classrooms indeed support pupils with disabilities, but in many schools, including ours, we're still using the old standard setup. There's limited awareness and sometimes we don't even know where to start. Last year, a parent requested that we make some changes for their child, but we couldn't respond immediately due to a lack of funds and technical support. Still, I believe if we had proper guidance, we could do better (HT7 Personal communication, 28 March 2025).

The responses from head teachers show a shared understanding of the value that adaptive classrooms bring in improving access to education for pupils with disabilities. HT6 highlights specific benefits and gives an example of successful modification, while also pointing out gaps in training and resources. HT7 confirms the importance but notes a lack of technical knowledge and financial capacity to implement necessary changes. This suggests that strong head teachers support adaptive learning spaces; effective implementation depends on training, funding, and expert guidance. The findings of the study correlate with those by Poonia et al., (2024), who affirmed that adaptive classrooms, through differentiated instruction and innovative technologies, play a crucial role in making education more accessible and effective for pupils with disabilities. While challenges like training and cost remain, the overall impact is positive, supporting academic achievement, engagement, and inclusion.

During focus group discussions, pupils with and without special education needs responded as follows when asked about how adaptive classrooms help pupils with disabilities to access education more easily. One pupil said, *"Our classroom has chairs that are not too high. This helps my friend who uses a wheelchair to sit well and write comfortably."* Another pupil added, *"In our class, the teacher writes in big letters on the board. This helps one boy who doesn't see well. He told me now he can copy notes without asking for help all the time."* A pupil with special education needs shared*, "I get tired quickly when I sit on hard benches. But now we have soft chairs and a table for me. I can learn better because I feel comfortable (FGDG2, 18 March 2025).* These responses indicate that pupils understand how adaptive classrooms, such as having proper furniture, clear writing, and enough space, help learners with disabilities to feel comfortable and take part in lessons like others. When classrooms are adjusted to fit pupils' different needs, it becomes easier for all children to learn, participate, and enjoy being at school. The findings relate to Mike Oliver's Social Theory of Disability (1983), which views disability as caused by societal barriers rather than individual impairments.

Data in Table 1 shows that a very high majority of teachers (70.8%) and a majority of school committee members (66.7%) rated to a high and very high extent that regular updating of school infrastructure promotes education access for pupils with disabilities. An extreme minority of teachers (15.9%) and school committee members (22.2%) rated this to a very low and low extent. Additionally, an extreme minority of teachers (13.2%) and school committee

members (11.1%) indicated a moderate extent. The mean score is 3.77 for teachers and 3.61 for school committee members. This implies that both teachers and school committee members acknowledge the importance of regularly modernizing infrastructure to meet the needs of learners with disabilities. The very high majority and majority ratings point to widespread agreement on the need for continual improvements. The mean scores suggest that a strong overall regular updating of school infrastructure promotes education access for pupils with disabilities.

During a face-to-face interview with the Head Teacher, HT3 had this to comment;

> Yes, updating infrastructure regularly is important, especially when it comes to things like classroom entrances, toilets, and pathways. These changes make a big difference for pupils with physical disabilities. However, in most cases, updates are only made when something is completely broken or unusable. There's no routine schedule, so pupils sometimes struggle in silence before anything is done (HT3 Personal communication, 17 March 2025).

Head Teacher 9 argued as follows;

> I support the idea. In fact, after we renovated the toilet area to be more accessible, one of our pupils in a wheelchair could finally use the facility independently. But I'll be honest; such updates depend heavily on donor support or special programs. It's difficult to maintain regular upgrades with the limited capitation grant we receive (HT9 Personal communication, 09 April 2025).

The interview responses from the head teachers highlight that regular infrastructure updates are essential in enhancing access to education for pupils with disabilities. HT3 points out that while updates are beneficial, they often happen reactively rather than proactively, leading to periods of inaccessibility. HT9 echoes the positive impact of such updates, citing real improvements in pupil independence, but raises concerns about funding limitations. Overall, the responses suggest that sustained improvements require structured planning and adequate financial support. The findings of the study are in line with those by Dube et al., (2021), who affirmed that updating and maintaining school infrastructure is fundamental to ensuring that pupils with disabilities have equal access to education. Accessible, safe, and inclusive facilities remove barriers, promote participation, and support the right of every child to learn in a gracious environment.

Data in Table 1 indicates that a very high majority of both teachers (70.2%) of teachers and school committee members (74.6%) rated to a high and very high extent that encouraging teachers and staff to identify areas for improvement enhances learning for pupils with disabilities. An extreme minority of teachers (12.6%) and school committee members (12.7%) rated this to a very low and low extent. Additionally, an extreme minority of teachers (17.2%) and school committee members (12.7%) indicated a moderate extent. The mean score is 3.83 for teachers and 3.88 for school committee members implies that most teachers and school committee members value teacher engagement in identifying infrastructural or pedagogical gaps that affect learners with disabilities. The very high majority rating reflects strong support for participatory approaches to inclusive education. The extreme minority responses may

indicate a few stakeholders who are less confident in staff-led initiatives. The high mean scores confirm general approval of empowering teachers to contribute to school improvement.
During a face-to-face interview with the Head Teachers, HT2 had this to add:

> … involving teachers in identifying what needs to change helps. They are the ones in the classrooms every day, so they notice small things that can make a big difference for pupils with disabilities. One of our teachers suggested rearranging desks to create more space for a child using a wheelchair it worked well. But not all staff are confident to speak up, especially if they think their ideas won't be taken seriously (HT2 Personal communication, 13 March 2025).

Head Teacher 7 had this to complement:

> When teachers are encouraged to exchange ideas, I've observed some positive outcomes. For instance, we changed the whiteboard after a teacher pointed out that it was too high for a student with a physical disability. However, instructors sometimes believe that the district office or the head should handle it and feel that they have no responsibility for it. Therefore, even though the technique works, it greatly depends on the attitude of the employees and whether the institution has an open culture (HT7 Personal communication, 28 March 2025).

The interviews with head teachers revealed that encouraging teachers and staff to identify areas for improvement positively impacts learning for pupils with disabilities. HT2 highlights that teachers' close interaction with learners gives them practical insight, but also notes hesitation among some staff to voice suggestions. HT7 supports this view, citing real improvements made through teacher input, while also pointing out that not all staff feel responsible or empowered. Both responses suggest that fostering an open, inclusive culture is essential for this approach to succeed. The findings of the study are in line with those by Ware et al., (2024), who affirmed that empowering teachers and staff to identify and address areas for improvement through reflection, collaboration, and targeted training enhances learning and development for pupils with disabilities.

Data in Table 1 shows that a majority of both teachers (66.3%) and (63.5%) of school committee members rated to a high and very high extent that establishing a specific budget for maintaining inclusive infrastructure enhances education access for pupils with special education needs. An extreme minority of teachers (15.9%) and school committee members (17.4%) rated this to a very low and low extent. Additionally, an extreme minority of teachers (17.9%) and school committee members (19%) indicated a moderate extent. The mean score is 3.69 for teachers and 3.56 for school committee members implies that most teachers and school committee members consider dedicated funding as essential for sustaining inclusive infrastructure. The majority of responses suggest a shared understanding that budgeting plays a central role in maintaining accessibility. Extreme minority responses show that a small segment is not prioritizing financial planning in the same way. The mean scores reflect overall agreement with the importance of budgetary allocation.

During a face-to-face interview with the Head Teacher, HT4 had this to comment:

> …having a specific budget for inclusive infrastructure would help. Right now, we depend on general maintenance funds, which are usually not enough. When something

> breaks, like a ramp or accessible toilet, we have to prioritize based on urgency, and unfortunately, disability-related needs are often postponed. But if there were a dedicated budget, these issues could be addressed on time (HT4 Personal communication, 20 March 2025).

The DPEO had the following to argue;

> It's a good idea in principle, and I agree that inclusive infrastructure is essential. But the reality is that our education budgets are already stretched thin. Sometimes we don't even get full disbursements. That said, if schools could at least allocate a portion of their capitation grants to support accessibility, it would be a step forward. But we need stronger policy direction and training at the local level to implement this effectively (DPEO Personal communication, 11 April 2025).

The interviews with HT4 and the DPEO reveal shared recognition of the importance of budgeting specifically for inclusive infrastructure. HT4 highlights the practical challenge of competing priorities within limited general funds, which often delay repairs or upgrades that support pupils with special needs. The DPEO supports the idea but points out systemic financial constraints and emphasizes the need for policy guidance and school-level initiative. Together, their views suggest that a specific budget would enhance access, but successful implementation depends on both financial commitment and structural support. The findings of the study are in line with those by Gapon et al., (2024) who affirmed that, well-managed budget for inclusive infrastructure is essential for improving access to education for pupils with special education needs. Such funding enables schools to provide necessary accommodations, resources, and support, ensuring that all students can participate fully and equitably in education.

The findings also correspond with the Social Theory of Disability, which argues that disability is primarily caused by societal and environmental barriers rather than individual impairments. In the context of public primary schools in Mvomero District, Tanzania, establishing a specific budget for maintaining inclusive infrastructure such as ramps, accessible toilets, and handrails demonstrates a structural commitment to removing such barriers. According to Oliver's theory, allocating resources to improve accessibility shifts the focus from the child's limitations to the responsibility of society to create an inclusive environment.

Generally, the findings from the study establish that school committees in Mvomero District maintain school infrastructure to a high extent, thereby enhancing access to education for pupils with special educational needs. This was confirmed by the activities such as maintaining ramps and handrails, ensuring regular infrastructure inspections, allocating resources for specialized equipment, and fostering close collaboration with parents' items that had the highest scores in responses. A grand mean score of 3.73 from teachers and 3.65 from school committee members indicated a strong consensus that such efforts are positively contributing to inclusive education. Interviews and focus group discussions confirmed that pupils with disabilities were more likely to attend and participate in class when physical and attitudinal barriers were addressed. The distinctive finding in the study was the proactive engagement of school committees in budgeting specifically for inclusive infrastructure maintenance, a strategy not widely documented in previous studies. The finding is related to the Social Model of Disability, which suggests that disability stems from environmental barriers rather than individual impairments.

10. Conclusion of the Study

Based on the findings, the study made the following conclusion:
School committees in Mvomero District contribute to a high extent in enhancing access to education for pupils with special education needs by regularly maintaining inclusive infrastructure. The study found that in most schools, well-maintained ramps, handrails, toilets, and adaptive classrooms supported by budget allocations and parental involvement have improved accessibility and learning environments, leading to increased participation and retention.

Recommendations for Action

Based on the conclusion of the study, the following recommendation was made:
School committee members should be provided with regular training on inclusive education, disability rights, and infrastructure standards. This training should aim to equip them with practical skills in planning, budgeting, and monitoring infrastructure projects that address the specific needs of pupils with special educational needs (SEN). Strengthening their capacity in these areas will enhance their effectiveness in ensuring that school environments are accessible, safe, and supportive for all learners.

Recommendations for Further Studies

Future studies should assess the effectiveness of school committee training programs on infrastructure maintenance effectiveness in improving access to education for pupils with special needs. This could be measured by evaluating variables such as the frequency of infrastructure repairs, the availability of accessible facilities, and enrollment rates of pupils with special educational needs before and after training interventions.

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