

Demystifying Mathematics: Handling Learning Disabilities in Mathematics Among Low Achievers in Kenyan Schools

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Abstract : Mathematics is a compulsory subject in both primary and secondary schools in Kenya. However, learners' poor performance in the subject in Kenya national examinations year in year out remains a serious concern for teachers of Mathematics, parents, curriculum developers, and the general public. This is particularly worrying because of the importance attached to the subject in national development hence the need to find out what could be affecting learning of Mathematics in Kenyan schools. The research on which this paper is based sought to examine the factors that influence performance in Mathematics in Kenyan schools; identify the characteristics of Mathematics learning disabilities; determine how the learners with such learning disabilities can be assessed and identified and interventions for these difficulties implemented. A case study was undertaken on class six learners in a primary school in Nairobi County. The tools used for the research were: classroom observations and an Individualized Education Program (IEP) developed by the teachers with the help of the researcher. This paper therefore highlights the findings from the research, discusses the implications of the findings and suggests the way forward as far as teaching, learning and assessment of Mathematics in Kenyan schools is concerned. Perhaps with the application of the right interventions, poor performance in Mathematics in the national examinations in Kenya will be a thing of the past.

Keywords : demystifying mathematics, individualized education program, learning difficulties, assessment

Conference Title : ICSNE 2023 : International Conference on Special Needs Education

Conference Location : San Francisco, United States

Conference Dates : June 05-06, 2023