Inclusion in special needs education is a new concept that requires that all learners be educated in general education classrooms. The Salamanca Declaration (1994) emphasizes that this policy be implemented immediately. This has however been noted to take place at a very low pace or even not taking place at all in some schools. Successful implementation of inclusion in schools is a positive direction towards achieving education for All (EFA). This study sought to investigate the challenges faced by school administrators in Keiyo Marakwet County in the process of implementing inclusive practices. The study population was drawn from all school administrators in schools that have embraced inclusive practices in Keiyo Marakwet County. The sample size of 32 respondents was drawn from the study population through purposive sampling. The study found that school administrators face a number of challenges and or barriers while implementing inclusive practices in schools. The challenges and or barriers affect the implementation level of inclusive practices and are related to the following: policy issues, parent support, knowledge, perception/attitude, resources and awareness among others. The study therefore recommended several practices for school administrators that need to be embraced so as to make implementation of inclusion in special needs education to be more meaningful and purposeful.
INTRODUCTION TO THE STUDY
Inclusion refers to the “full-time placement of children with mild, moderate and severe disabilities in regular classrooms” (Sebba & Sachdev, 1997). The inclusion movement believes that children with special needs should be placed in the regular school classroom which they would have otherwise attended, if they had been “normal” children. In other words, each child belongs to the regular classroom and therefore, there should be no condition imposed, to exclude him/her from that environment.

The concept of inclusive education is based on the fact that all children and young people, despite different cultural, social and learning backgrounds, should have equivalent learning opportunities in all kinds of schools (UNESCO, 2008). UNESCO emphasizes that education systems, schools and teachers should focus on generating inclusive settings that uphold the values of respect and understanding of cultural, social and individual diversity. Essentially, inclusive education is an approach that looks into how to transform education systems and other learning environments in order to respond to the diversity of learners. Removing barriers to participation in learning for all learners is at the core of inclusive education systems (UNESCO, 2005). Focusing on inclusive education can be useful in guiding development of policies and strategies that address the causes and consequences of discrimination, inequality and exclusion within the holistic framework of EFA goals.

The Concept of inclusive education is enshrined in international conventions including: the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child (1989), which sets out children’s rights in respect of freedom from discrimination and in respect of the representation of their wishes and views; the UNESCO Salamanca Statement (1994) which calls on all governments to give the highest priority to inclusive education; and the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (2006) which calls on all Parties to ensure an inclusive education system at all levels.

The GoK is committed to the provision of inclusive education to all children, youth and adults through targeted support to specific or vulnerable groups. Furthermore, the GoK emphasizes inclusive education with particular focus to marginalized groups, especially the girl child and children with special needs and those with disabilities. This commitment includes establishment of a Sector-Wide Approach to Planning (SWAP), enhanced legislation, resource mobilization and allocation and ratification of relevant international conventions and declarations.

The Government has made progress in the provision of educational services for persons with special needs and disabilities, with various challenges at hand: inadequate data on children
with special educational needs and disabilities, lack of a comprehensive policy on SNE and proper guidelines on mainstreaming of special needs education at all levels and in the country, lack of appropriate tools and skills for early identification and assessment, inadequate physical infrastructure, teaching/learning materials and facilities appropriate for SNE learners and inadequate skilled manpower and inappropriate placement of children with special needs and disabilities. In an attempt to provide quality special needs education, the government has committed itself towards inclusive education and has set out to re-examine the provision of education to all through review of existing physical facilities, curriculum, instruction materials and teacher preparation to ensure that all learners have equal access to quality and relevant education (MOE, 2010).

Challenges facing Inclusive Practices
Successful school administrators must create an inviting atmosphere. According to Purkey (1996), some key tenets of invitational education include: creating a democratically oriented, positive approach to leadership; educating in a collaborative and cooperative manner; appreciating that all staff and students have untapped potential and being intentionally inviting, both personally and professionally. A key characteristic for the principal is trust in others and optimism that Purkey calls a “positive vision of human existence: that individuals are valuable and capable.” This applies equally to how the principal treats staff and how he/she views students with disabilities. Each student in school should be perceived as a” person of value”. When applying this philosophy, an atmosphere of mutual respect and positive regard increases the likelihood of student success. Purkey urges principals to “visit the provinces” ie in addition to visiting each class; they should visit the staffroom, resource rooms, dormitories and playgrounds among others.

Efforts involved in implementation of Inclusive Education by administrators have got challenges that are facing them. Perceptions of the people in our environment pose a great challenge to the implementation of inclusive practices. Responses to this inhuman treatment often elicited a charitable or protective response which sometimes led to improvements in the material circumstances of disabled people. Disabled people were objects of charity or asylum and subjected to patronizing attitudes based on the non-disabled person’s view of them as not fully human or as incapable of living ordinary lives (Bowe, 2005).

Financing and support of educational services for students with special needs is a primary concern, regardless of available resources. Yet a growing body of research asserts that inclusive education is not only cost efficient, but also that equity is the way to excellence. Within education, countries are increasingly realizing the inefficiency of multiple systems of administration, organizational structures and services, and that special schools
are a financially unrealistic option. For example (OECD, 1994) report estimates that the average cost of putting students with special educational needs in segregated placements is seven to nine times higher than educating them in general classrooms.

According to Agbenyega (2006), many regular education teachers who feel unprepared and fearful to work with learners with disabilities in regular classes display frustration, anger and negative attitude toward inclusive education because they believe it could lead to lower academic standards (Gary, 1997; Tiegerman-Farber, 1998). Additionally, access to resources and specialist support affects teacher confidence and attitudes toward inclusive education (Bennett, 1997; Katzenmeyer, 1997). The teachers’ beliefs about inclusion suggest that they do not regard students with disabilities, particularly those with sensory impairments as belonging in regular classes and would rather prefer them being educated in existing special schools. Teachers also believed that including students with disabilities limits the amount of teaching work they could do thereby resulting in incompletion of the syllabuses, teachers also believed that if students with disabilities were included in regular classes it would affect the academic performance of their peers without disabilities, Teachers perceived that their professional knowledge and skills were inadequate to effectively teach students with disabilities in regular schools. Further, the teachers expressed fear and concern, that because they do not have the required knowledge and expertise to teach students with disabilities who are included in their regular classes; it is contributing to a reduction in the academic success of their schools (Hastings & Oakford, 2003).

Qualified teachers know that classroom needs must be approached “from a curricular standpoint”, in which difficulties are defined depending on each specific task and activity, and on classroom conditions. Most teachers are not qualified to handle the students with physical challenges. School administrators recognize that inclusive opportunities need to focus on inclusion in life thus what needs to be done is to develop programs that address skills beyond the classroom walls. In a study by Klingner et al. (1990), teachers report that “administrative backing” and “principal’s support” were significant in breaking down barriers, providing extra in-service opportunities and developing innovative strategies. The conclusion was that administrators set the tone for a schools acceptance for change.

Ordinary learners and challenged learners are different modes of understanding thus making one ahead of the other. The challenged students are not fast learners thus need more attention when handling them. Inaccessible environment, lack of support from teachers and school make most of the learners repeat or drop out of school thus not boosting their morale. The principal’s participation in a school-based team is often considered key support for students with disabilities. According to Zetlin (2000), the resource coordinating team
comprises of the principal, psychologist, nurse, special education specialist, social worker, attendance counselor and others like parents and family members may be included. According to Rafoth & Foriska, (2006) the impact of the principal on the problem solving consultation team is of utmost importance. Idol (2002) found out that when principal’s support inclusion and is perceived positively by teachers as the instructional leader, programs are more successful. Frequent visits to classrooms by principals combined with asking teachers what they realistically need were effective. The key implementer i.e. the teacher needs administrative support in order for him/her to implement inclusive policies effectively. Administrative support according to Yoon & Gilchris, (2003) can include support for in-service training for general and special education teachers, paraprofessionals and other staff; payment for time spent outside regular school hours; credits towards service requirements; clerical support for record keeping and direct intervention with student’s aggressive behaviors. Accessibility of a member of the administrative team demonstrates support, empathy and help in problem solving. Additionally, allowing staff input into scheduling and student grouping decisions boosts morale and effectiveness.

Inclusion in special needs education is a new concept that requires that all learners be educated in general education classrooms. The Salamanca Declaration (1994) emphasizes that this policy be implemented immediately. This has however be noted to take place at a very low pace or even not taking place at all in some schools. Successful implementation of inclusion in schools is a positive direction towards achieving education for All (EFA). This study sought to investigate the challenges faced by school administrators in Keiyo Marakwet County in the process of implementing inclusive practices.

PRESENTATION OF FINDINGS AND CONCLUSION
2.1 Administrator’s Background Information
2.1.1 Gender of the Respondent
In relation to gender of the respondents, it was established that majority (69%) were male administrators while 31% were female administrators. Since the study was not a gender based, sampling was done randomly and therefore it was representative. This therefore indicates that there are more male administrators in inclusive schools in Keiyo Marakwet County than they are female administrators. This information has been summarized in figure 1.
2.1.2 Age of the Respondent

From the study findings it was established that majority of the respondents (51%) were school administrators aged 31-40 years, 31% were aged 41-50 years, 9% were above 50 years while few (3%) were aged 20-30 years. Figure 2 has a summary of the findings.
2.3 Administrative Challenges in the Implementation of Inclusive Practices

Administrative challenges were categorized into policy and social challenges as well as economic challenges. Furthermore, due to the importance attached to these challenges, Likert scale was used for answering (1 = Agree, 2 = Disagree, 3 = Not sure). Thus, this question was analyzed by using the mean to identify the rank of each attribute. This is as shown in Table 1.

As a result, the study found that negative perception by community members towards inclusion was ranked first (1.11); lack of parental support towards inclusive practices was ranked second (1.34); inadequate teachers for handling inclusive programs was ranked third (1.41); lack of clarity on the implementation of inclusive programs was ranked fourth (1.50); and poor teacher support on inclusivity was ranked fifth (1.95).
Furthermore, it was established that poor support of the inclusive practices by education managers was ranked sixth (2.01); inadequate skilled and trained teachers to handle inclusive programs was ranked seventh (2.16); inadequate support of inclusive practices by teachers was ranked eighth (2.23); negative perception of teachers towards inclusive practices was ranked ninth (2.34); while low level of awareness by community members on the inclusivity was ranked the least with a mean of 2.41 from the Likert scale.

From the study findings presented in Table 4.1, it is evident that respondents agreed to all the variables under policy and social challenges facing administrators in the implementation of inclusive practices/programs. This is attested by the variables having means of 1.11-2.41 respectively which stands for ‘agree’ from the Likert scale (Msc. < 2.50). However, the use of ranks was just to show the extent of respondents’ agreement to the variables affecting implementation of inclusive practices.

It is clear that negative perception from the community members hinder implementation of inclusive programs. This is because negative perception will imply that despite the schools introducing the concept of inclusivity, the community members will not support the program and yet for that kind of practice to prosper, schools need community members and more so parents to take their children there. This perception extends to teachers who are the actual implementers of inclusive practices. When teachers have negative perception towards the programme, then the level of adoption and implementation is highly affected. Teachers therefore, may refuse to handle inclusive classes or handle them with ‘a don’t caring’ kind of attitude.

The study also established that for the program to be effective, inclusive schools ought to have adequate teachers. Since not all schools offer inclusive programs due to lack of both human and other resources, the study established that inclusive schools in Elgeyo Marakwet County have many students. This therefore has an implication to the available teachers. Furthermore, availability of teachers alone is not sufficient enough to sustain inclusive practices. However, skills, knowledge-ability through special training of these teachers is very crucial.

In relation to, the study found that lack of clarity on the implementation of inclusive practices and poor support of the inclusive practices by education managers were the major policy related challenges affecting implementation of inclusive practices by school administrators. Clear policies are very vital in providing direction and giving guidelines to the school administrators on the way forward.

A close scrutiny of the findings indicate that; negative perception by community members towards inclusion; lack of parental support
towards inclusive practices; inadequate teachers for handling inclusive programs; lack of clarity on the implementation of inclusive programs; poor teacher support on inclusivity; poor support of the inclusive practices by education managers; inadequate skilled and trained teachers to handle inclusive programs; inadequate support of inclusive practices by teachers; negative perception of teachers towards inclusive practices and low level of awareness by community members and parents on the inclusivity were the policy and social challenges affecting the implementation of inclusive practices by school administrators of Elgeyo Marakwet County.

Table 1: Policy and Social Challenges Affecting Implementation of Inclusive Practices

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Policy and Social Challenges</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Std. Deviation</th>
<th>Rank</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Negative perception by community members towards inclusion</td>
<td>1.11</td>
<td>0.32</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lack of parental support towards inclusive practices</td>
<td>1.34</td>
<td>0.23</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Inadequate teachers for handling inclusive programs</td>
<td>1.41</td>
<td>0.41</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lack of clarity on the implementation of inclusive programs</td>
<td>1.50</td>
<td>0.92</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Poor teacher support on inclusivity</td>
<td>1.95</td>
<td>0.39</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Poor support of the inclusive practices by education managers</td>
<td>2.01</td>
<td>1.03</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Inadequate skilled and trained teachers to handle inclusive programs</td>
<td>2.16</td>
<td>0.36</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Inadequate support of inclusive practices by teachers</td>
<td>2.23</td>
<td>0.91</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Negative perception of teachers towards inclusive practices</td>
<td>2.34</td>
<td>1.13</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Low level of awareness by community members on the inclusivity</td>
<td>2.41</td>
<td>1.07</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

2.3.2 Economic Challenges Affecting Implementation of Inclusive Practices

In relation to economic challenges, five variables were used to measure these challenges. Likert scale on the other hand, was used for answering (1 = Agree, 2 = Disagree, 3 = Not sure). Thus, this question was analyzed by using the mean to identify the rank of each attribute. This is as shown in Table 2.

As a result, the study established that inadequate learning resources and materials was ranked first (1.24); inadequate facilities for inclusive practices like classrooms, playgrounds was ranked second (1.31); inadequate funds for running and supporting the program was ranked third (1.39); poor motivation of teachers who are inclusive programs was ranked fourth (1.41) while poor financial support from parents and community members was ranked fifth with a mean of 1.51 from the Likert scale.

From the study findings, it is clear that, respondents who the school administrators agreed
to all the variables under economic challenges as affecting the implementation of inclusive practices. This is attested by the variables having means of 1.24-1.51 respectively which stands for ‘agree’ from the Likert scale (Msc. < 2.50). Furthermore, as it was stated earlier (section 2.3.1), the use of ranks was just to show the extent of respondents’ agreement to the variables affecting implementation of inclusive practices.

Consequently, for inclusive practices to be effectively implemented, the schools should have adequate learning resources and materials which can aid children in inclusive schools. This is because inclusivity implies that children have diverse background in terms of their demographic characteristics, physical and psychological/mental properties. This is where normal children are merged with those with special needs. This therefore calls for various inclusive schools to acquire learning materials that accommodate these diversities. On the same note, facilities like classrooms, playgrounds, playing equipments among others should be enough in order to cater for the needs of all children in the inclusive environment.

The study also established that administrators were weary of the inadequate funds for running the program. Implementation of inclusive practices is expensive compared to normal programs. This is due to the diverse nature of pupils in the inclusive environment. Some require special treatment in terms of materials, personnel and facilities which are quite expensive and therefore without adequate funds, the program may fail. Teachers who are in inclusive program need to be motivated owing to the complex nature of their work. Motivation increases teacher morale in handling and helping the children.

A close scrutiny of the findings indicate that inadequate learning resources and materials; inadequate facilities for inclusive practices like classrooms and playgrounds; inadequate funds for running and supporting the program; poor motivation of teachers who are inclusive programs and poor financial support from parents and community members were economic challenges affecting the implementation of inclusive practices by school administrators of Elgeyo Marakwet County.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Std. Deviation</th>
<th>Rank</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Inadequate learning resources and materials</td>
<td>1.24</td>
<td>0.43</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Inadequate facilities for inclusive practices</td>
<td>1.31</td>
<td>0.46</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Inadequate funds for running and supporting the program</td>
<td>1.39</td>
<td>0.49</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Poor motivation of teachers who are inclusive programs</td>
<td>1.41</td>
<td>0.49</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Poor financial support from parents and community members</td>
<td>1.51</td>
<td>0.50</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
2.4 Conclusion
Following the above findings, the study concludes that inclusive education is very crucial in our communities because all children are entitled to equal treatment in all spheres including education. Therefore, supporting inclusive schools in implementing their programs is also very vital. Policies on inclusivity are very necessary in order to show the administrators and as well as other stakeholders the right direction to follow. They enhance effective adoption and implementation of relevant content and curriculum for inclusive environment. Furthermore, social and economic challenges that affect inclusive practices should be addressed in order for schools to effectively implement inclusive programs.

2.5 Recommendations
Perception of community members and parents: There is need for the government through school management committee to carry out sensitization campaigns on the importance of inclusive education programs at the community level. This will assist parents and other community members to appreciate the program and thus providing their support to help the programs. In addition, creation of awareness will help to eliminate negative perceptions that community members as well as parents have towards inclusivity. The school administrators should also create an inviting, positive, accepting school climate. The school administrators should intervene personally in serious behavior situations and be knowledgeable about education of students with disabilities. They should also lead, serve on or support the team or committee of special education.

Teachers in inclusive setting: Teachers are vital element in the implementation of inclusive practices. There is therefore need for the government through teachers’ employer (TSC) to reconsider reviewing salaries for these teachers or introduce inclusive allowance. This is because the kind of work and nature pupils in inclusive environment is complex. In addition, special regular training needs to be initiated in order to assist these teachers cope with the dynamicism of inclusivity. The school administrators should visit and interact with teacher’s frequently in classrooms and around the school as well as allowing input into planning and scheduling. He or she should also provide common planning time for co-teachers or collaborative teachers as well as offering incentives and credits.

Policy issues: Despite the fact that the government has policies in place which address inclusive practices, administrators feel that these policies do not adequately address the dynamic nature of inclusive education. As a result therefore, there is need for the government through Ministry of Education to re-align these policies in order to address all issues related to inclusive education. For instance, review of inclusive curriculum and contents. The school administrators play an important role in policy implementation, for example they should schedule
in-service training and encourage professional development through recommending the selection of colleagues.

**Economic issues:** from the study findings it was established that inadequate resources, funds and facilities hampers implementation of inclusive practices. There is need for the school management to prioritize their school projects in order to maximally utilize the limited resources available. Furthermore, creation of awareness among community members in supporting their inclusive schools is very pertinent. The government also needs to re-consider budgeting for inclusive schools because the facilities, materials and resources needed is very expensive. The school administrators should provide up to date information, resources, materials and current individualized education programme (IEP) data.

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