

## **ABSTRACT**

Children with Autism Spectrum Disorders (ASD) have a neurological disorder that affects their social, behavioral, cognitive, verbal, and nonverbal functioning. These children have a right to access education. In Mombasa County, statistics from Educational Assessment and Resource Centers (EARCs) indicated that 88 learners with ASD were assessed between 2011 and 2015 but the majority 45 (51.14) were not accessing education as only 43 (48.86) were accessing education in special schools and units. The perception of ASD among stakeholders is important if these children have to access education. The purpose of this study was to find out the perceptions of selected stakeholders on educational accessibility of learners with ASD in Mombasa County. The objectives of this study were to find out; perceptions of parents on educational accessibility of learners with ASD, Perceptions of teachers on educational accessibility of learners with ASD and Perceptions of education administrators on educational accessibility of learners with ASD. A conceptual framework indicating the relationship between factors affecting perception of selected stakeholders and the educational accessibility of learners with ASD was used. A descriptive research design was used. The target population consisted of 45 parents, 45 teachers and 22 education administrators. The study used saturated sampling procedure to select 40 parents, 40 teachers and 20 education administrators. The study used saturated sampling technique since the entire target population was used as the sample population apart from the ten percent which was used during the piloting. The instruments for this study were questionnaires and interview schedule. Face and content validity of the instruments were determined by the experts from the department of Special Needs Education. Reliability of the instrument was ascertained through a pilot study using a test re-test: The researcher then correlated the two tests using Pearson correlation resulting to a correlation coefficient of 0.70. Quantitative data was analyzed through percentages, while qualitative data was analyzed according to themes and sub-themes as they emerged. The study findings revealed that perception of parents is affected by lack of academic progress among their children, lack of knowledge of ASD 25 (62.5%); lack of trained teachers (35 (87.5%) and lack of specialized learning materials 39 (97.5%). It was also revealed that teachers were not ready to handle learners with ASD due to lack of ASD knowledge 37 (92.5%); lack of specialized learning materials 38 (95.0%); Lack of schools for learners with ASD 36 (90.0%) and lack of training among teachers 40 (100.0%). It was further revealed that Education Administrators lacked knowledge on ASD and clear policies to govern the education of learners with ASD. The researcher therefore recommends that schools be equipped with learning materials and ASD trained teachers, awareness be created to equip education administrators with ASD knowledge and the government comes up with clear policies that will govern the education of learners with ASD. The study may be used by education stakeholders to help children with ASD access education and, contribute to the knowledge gap in the area of educational accessibility of learners with ASD.