

**TEACHER'S ATTITUDES TOWARDS MENTALLY  
RETARDED LEARNERS IN SELECTED  
INCLUSIVE EDUCATIONAL  
SETTINGS OF EMULOLE  
BASE, EMASATSI  
DIVISION**

**KHWISERO DISTRICT,  
KENYA**

**BY**

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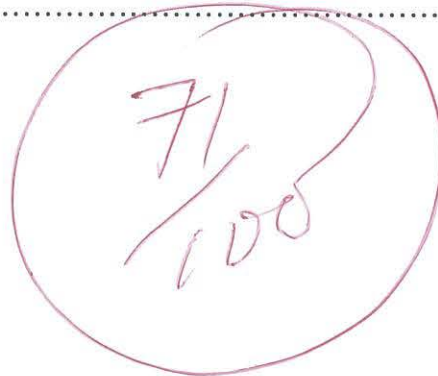
## APPROVAL

This Research dissertation entitled Teacher's attitudes towards mentally retarded learners' in selected inclusive educational settings case study: Emulole Base Emasatsi Division, Khwisero District, Kenya was done under my supervision guidance as a university supervisor has been submitted to KIU for approval.

Signature.....

Taligoola Nabusetse Deborah

Date..... 23 / 8 / 10



71/100

## **DEDICATION**

This research dissertation is dedicated to the learners who are mentally retarded in Emulole Base Emasatsi Division, John Were Makuku my beloved friend and by beloved father the late Josiah Eyenga Okutoyi.

## OPERATIONAL DEFINITION OF TERMS

**Mental Retardation:** -children who have sub-average general intellectual functioning with deficits in adaptive behavior.

**Attitude:** - Positive or negative feelings towards any situation.

**Inclusive Education:** - Ensuring that schools and centers of learning are open to all children.

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## ABSTRACT

Due to the free primary education that was implemented in 2002 in Kenya, Most pupils with mentally retardation were admitted to the regular schools this prompted the researcher to investigate teacher's attitudes towards mentally retarded learners.

The study was carried in Emulole Base Emasatsi Division, Khwisero District, Kenya for eight months of December to July 2010. The study obtained information from teachers both male and female in the five sampled schools the sampling was done randomly. Names of schools were written on a piece of paper and five schools picked randomly.

The researcher used questionnaires that were developed from the research objectives, pretesting with a few hand to different teachers four from each primary school who were also picked randomly.

The respondents were familiar with the researcher and all the questions were filled and collected without any, difficult as most of the schools were easily accessible.

From the study most of the teachers are well educated to diploma and degree levels and a few are still p1 certificate holders. This could be the reason why some teachers have negative attitude towards including mentally retarded in the ordinary class.



## **CHAPTER ONE**

### **INTRODUCTION**

#### **1.0 BACKGROUND OF THE STUDY**

Before the 17th century people with disabilities all over the World were considered socially and physically less capable hence they were not easily accepted and regarded as part and parcel of the family and community some African communities used to throw such children in the bush because women were expected to give birth to healthy children.

Mental retardation is a term used to identify and observed performance deficit failure to demonstrate age appropriate behaviors (William Et al 1980).

The negative attitudes of the society towards the learners with mental retardation have persisted throughout the history of special needs education. The negative attitudes of the society towards the learners with mental retardation and their families are discriminated. This is clearly indicated by the earliest names of people with mental retardation which had negative connotations such as idiots and morons. They were abusive derogative and dehumanizing.

These negative attitudes have led to children with mental retardation being educated in segregated school settings in form of special schools and special units. Ngugi (2002) cites the white paper 1992 which spells out the government's commitment to providing primary education for all responsible irrespective of their differences. The government particularly includes among other things interrogation of persons with disabilities to ordinary schools.

However the fundamental question is whether the teachers have the right attitude towards learners with mental retardation. It must be realized that in the absence, of positive attitudes in the teachers, ordinary schools would not be able to provide ways and means of meeting the individual needs of this learners. The philosophy of inclusion will therefore be tantamount to paying lip service. Njeru (2003) cited Rosenthal and Jackson (1968) who in their publications

stated that positive teacher expectation can loose the achievements of a child with mental retardation.

The positive would be the case in the event of negative teachers expectations previous studies on teachers attitudes towards learners with mental retardation revealed mixed findings on teachers who would be expected to have favorable attitudes towards these children. If mentally retarded children are to be educated alongside their counterparts in the ordinary class the teachers need to have positive attitudes towards them since negative attitudes in teachers may be transmitted to them and their peers which may affect them socially, emotionally and academically. Regular education initiative was introduced in 1986 in the United States by Madeleine will assistant secretary of education which stated that general education rather than special education should be primarily responsible for the education of students with disabilities. In 1981, after the international year for the disabled it was seen that children with disability who went to regular schools got better education than those who went to special schools Randiki (2002). Erick (1995) in his publication stated that placing handicapped students in regular classroom makes more demands on time and talents of the teachers. Assessing teacher attitudes is vital to providing teachers with training and supports to enable them meet the challenge successively. The prevalence of mentally retarded in Kenya is 3% of the total population. Emasatsi Division, Khwisero district in the western province of Kenya has the large percentage of mentally retarded learners. This prompted the researcher to further study and explore on teachers' attitudes towards learners with mental retardation in Emulole Base primary schools.

## **1.2 STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM**

Due to free primary education learners with mental handicapped have been admitted in regular schools in Emulole Base Emasatsi Division, Khwisero district. There has not been systematic study in Emulole Base Emasatsi Division, on attitudes of teachers towards these learners with mental handicap; this prompted the researcher to carry out the study in Emulole Base Emasatsi Division, Khwisero district, western province Kenya and the prevalence of mental retardation being 2 % more learners.

### **1.3 OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY**

#### **1.3.1 The general objective**

To find out the Teacher's attitudes towards mentally retarded learners' in selected inclusive educational settings in Emulole Base Emasatsi Division, Khwisero District, Kenya.

#### **1.3.2 Specific Objectives**

The study was guided by the following objectives:-

- i) To find out the prevalence and causes of mental retardation in Emulole Base Emasatsi Division.
- ii) To find out teacher's knowledge about learners who are mentally retarded.
- iii) To investigate teachers' opinions towards educating learners who are mentally retarded.

### **1.4 PURPOSE OF THE STUDY**

The purpose of the study was to assess the teacher's attitude towards the mentally retarded learners in selected inclusive educational settings in Emulole Base Emasatsi Division, Khwisero district, Kenya

### **1.5 RESEARCH QUESTIONS**

In order to meet these objectives, the study attempted to answer the following research questions.

- i. What is the prevalence of children with mental retardation and causes of retardation in Emulole Base Emasatsi Division?
- ii. What are the characteristics of mentally retarded children in Emulole Base Emasatsi Division?
- iii. What is the teachers' knowledge about learners who are mentally retarded?
- iv. What are the teachers' opinions towards educating mentally retarded learners in Emulole Base Emasatsi Division?

## **1.5 SCOPE OF THE STUDY**

The study was carried out in Emulole Base Emasatsi Division, Khwisero district, Kenya. Emasatsi division has a large population in the district thus has a large number of learners with mental retardation. Therefore it was necessary to find out the causes of mental retardation, characteristics and opinions of teachers towards educating learners who were mentally retarded. Study was conducted for a period of eight months December-July, 2010 about the Teacher's attitudes towards mentally retarded learners' in selected inclusive educational settings in Emulole Base Emasatsi Division, Khwisero District, Kenya.

## **1.6 SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY**

This study was designed to create awareness to teachers in Emulole Base Emasatsi Division to accept learners with mental retardation as important persons who need to explore their potentials fully.

The findings provided information which would enable the government to set policy of training teachers to handle mentally retarded learners.

The findings also provided information to parents of mentally retarded learner's to provide education for such learners in Kenya.

The society in general were made aware of the needs of mentally retarded learners hence in turn provide support services to them. The findings also formed basis for future related studies.

## **CHAPTER TWO: LITERATURE REVIEW**

### **2.0 INTRODUCTION**

In this chapter the theories on which this study was based had been discussed. The related literature was reviewed under the following topics. Definition of mental retardation classification, causes, characteristics, education, provision for learners who are mentally retarded, intervention strategies and attitudes towards learners with mental retardation.

### **2.1 Theoretical framework.**

This study was based on the theory of psychosocial development by Enckson as cited by Ndurumo (1993).

According to Ndurumo (1993) this theory sets in basic requirements that are essential to learning not being adequately achieved. The theory is grouped into five stages of development from infancy to the age of 18 years. They include, Trust versus Doubt, Initiative versus Inferiority and Identity versus Role confusion.

#### **Trust versus Mistrust**

It occurs between births to one year. A child at this stage needs to develop basic trust, which means that the child needs consistency. When these elements are not present mistrust sets in.

#### **Autonomy versus Doubts**

It is said to take place between the ages of two to three years. A child at this stage needs to experience minimum degree of autonomy to reach out, try his skills and explore. This leads to development of basic confidence. When the child is denied the opportunities to develop these skills, the child develops self doubt.

#### **Initiative versus Guilt**

This stage is developed between the ages of four to five years. The child needs freedom to explore his environment, to use his/her skills in diverse activities and to use his fast developing verbal language skills to express self on the new areas he has explored, achieved and given meaning to when the freedom is curtailed, the child feels frustrated and this may lead to guilt and frustration.

### **Industry versus Inferiority**

This stage takes place between the ages of 6-11. The child strives to do things in a more structured and goal oriented way. This may include classroom work, goal oriented activities such as helping out household chores. When children do these tasks and are praised for them, this boosts their morale and a feeling of accomplishment when opportunities to undertake these tasks may be limited.

### **Identity versus role confusion**

This is a crucial stage in child development and occurs between the ages of 12 – 18 years. The child at this stage is developing rapidly, mentally, socially and physically. Therefore the child likes to recognize the continuity and sameness in ones personal and physical development in different situations. When the child is reacted to approximately and finds a welcoming atmosphere or environment the child feels accepted. However, when the child is not accepted he or she feels confused.

## **2.2 Definition of mental retardation.**

There are several definitions of mental retardation.

The concept of mental retardation has been proposed, debated, revised, and counter proposed over many years and still the debate goes on:

A definition offered by a professional within a given discipline may be functional only if you are using that particular perspective. For example a definition of mental retardation based solely on biological or medical criteria, while useful to doctors and nurses would not be functional for a teacher or a psychologist (William et al 1980).

Mercer (1973) defines mental retardation according to social system perspective in which “mental retardate” is an achieved social status and mental retardation is the role associated with that status.”

Hutt (1979) states that mental retardation is a condition in which the cognitive development of the individual is inferior to that of average individuals of a similar age.

Herber (1961) states that mental retardation refers to sub – average general intellectual functioning associated with impairment in adaptive behavior.

By far the most widely accepted definition is the one adopted by the American Association of Mental Deficiency (AAMD) in 1959. It states that mental retardation refers to significantly sub average general intellectual functioning existing with deficits in adaptive behavior and manifest during the developmental period.

**Classification of mental retardation**

The most widely used classification of mental retardation is the one provided by the American Association on Mental Deficiency in 1973. It delineates four levels of retardation, namely mild, moderate, severe and profound.

It takes into consideration the results of measured intelligence using intelligence tests with standard deviations of 15 and 16; therefore it accommodates the standard deviations obtained from different scales.

**LEVEL OF MENTAL RETARDATION**

Degree of Mental Retardation	Stanford – Binet Scale (SD 16)	Wechsler Scale (SD 15)	Educational Terms
Mild	67 – 52	69 – 55	Educable
Moderate	51 – 36	54 – 40	Trainable
Severe	35 – 20	39 - 25	Trainable
Profound	19 and below	24 and below (extrapolated)	Severe profound

**Source: primary data 2010**

**Mild retardation:** Children under this classification need some adaptations of the regular academic program. They can be educated according to the abilities. The program includes self care, leisure, academics, pre-vocational, competence and home living.

**Moderate retardation:** they need major adaptations on a regular school program according to their abilities. Emphasis should be given to interaction and communication, self-care and prevocational skills.

**Severe retardation:** they are those who may benefit from individualized programs (I.E.P). They could be home based or hospital based. However, emphasis should be put on interaction and communication and self help competences Ndurumo (1993).

### **2.3 Causes of mental retardation**

Mental retardation may be caused before birth (pre-natal stage), during birth (pre-natal stage) and after birth (post-natal stage)

#### **Prenatal causes (before birth)**

These may include:

- Hereditary
- Poor nutrition for example due to unbalanced diet and lack of vitamins and proteins during pregnancy.
- Venereal diseases such as syphilis and gonorrhoea.
- Disease such as rubella (German measles) and those involving high fever such as malaria.
- Use of certain drugs such as quinine, aspirin and antibiotics.
- Exposure to x-ray especially during the first three months of pregnancy.
- Misuse of narcotic drugs such as quinine, aspirin and antibiotics.
- Exposure to x-ray especially during the first three months of pregnancy.
- Misuse of narcotic drugs, cigarettes and alcohol.
- Accidents
- Incompatibility of mother-child blood type (the rhesus factor incompatibility)



- Emotional state of the mother (stress)

### **Prenatal causes (during birth)**

These may include:

- Breech delivery
- Prolonged labor or delivery
- Anoxia (lack of oxygen during birth)
- Use of forceps
- Cord strangulation
- Pre-mature birth.

### **Post natal causes (after delivery)**

These may include:

- Accidents
- Diseases e.g. Malaria, Meningitis
- Intoxications
- Malnutrition

## **2.4 Characteristics of learners who are mentally retarded**

### **General characteristics**

Most of the mentally retarded individuals can be identified by the general physical characteristics for instance a child with Down syndrome can be detected through the moon shaped face, short fingers, protruding tongue and other physical characteristics. Along with these, they lack self help skills such as dressing, undressing, feeding and personal grooming.

### **Personal characteristics**

Mentally retarded children are candidates for a variety of social and emotional problem. They have problems making friends Luftig (1988) and have poor self concepts. They engage in higher rates of inattention and disruptive behavior than their non-retarded counterparts. These children have problems in social interactions with others, for example verbal or physical aggression and avoidance of academic tasks whenever possible.

In addition to social–emotional problems and perhaps to some degree because of these difficulties many persons who are retarded have motivational problems (Zigler and Balla 1982). The children who are mentally retarded tend to lack confidence in their own abilities and may also respond inappropriately to social situations unless instructed otherwise. Some have speech problems making communication difficult.

Many retarded persons have few contacts and opportunities because they live, school or work in sheltered or isolated environments. They therefore attempt to become social acquaintances with their professional contacts. In an effort to maintain those contacts some will overcompensate, calling their friends too many times, demanding attention and not being able to let up.

## **2.5 Provision of Education in Kenya for the Mentally Retarded**

Special education in Kenya was started after the World War II. It was mainly aimed to cater for increasing numbers of the disabled ex–servicemen and civilians from the war.

The Salvation Army and other non–governmental organizations were among the first to cater for these handicapped individuals.

The first school of the mentally retarded was established in 1948. This was St. Nicholas and Agar-khan which was later merged to form Jacaranda special School situated in Kileleshwa Nairobi.

The Kenya Society for mentally handicapped was established in 1968 with the primary aim of ‘catering or caring for, treating and rehabilitating the mentally retarded persons’ In 1970, Karatina and Meru schools were established, followed by Mombasa Agar-khan special school in 1971. From 1968 to 1980 the number of schools and programs for the mentally retarded grew slowly as compared to other categories of handicap. For example in 1968 there were only two programs with an enrolment of 40 learners compared to hearing impairments of thirteen with an enrolment 444.

By 1980 the number increased to 14 though the enrolment remained low compared to 222 of hearing impairment with an enrolment of 1400 learners the increase in number may have been as a result of public awareness in that year. The then president Daniel Arap Moi declared 1980 as the national year of the disabled.

After 1981, the programs expanded registered 1728 learners in 1986 approximately 52 programs.

Ndurumo (1993): The government supports special education through funds, training teachers at KISE (Kenya Institute of Special Education) and other institutions of learning.

The establishment of Education Assessment Resource centers in 1984 brought light awareness on the education of the handicapped in Kenya. At the centers, special teachers, social workers and other professionals are available to support and advise parents of handicapped children.

Today children who are mentally retarded are being educated in special schools, special units and ordinary schools.

In 2003 the government of Kenya declared free and compulsory education for all. This has seen an influx of children including those with mental retardation into schools.

## **2.6 Intervention strategies to support learners with Mental retardation**

Learners who are mentally retarded can be assisted in the following ways:-

### **Assessment**

Assessment of mentally retarded can be done in hospital for medical intervention. This can be done in Educational and Resource centers in Nairobi for educational placements or referral to hospital.

### **Guidance**

This is another intervention strategy. The onset of the parent knowing about the child's mental retardation may affect the parents psychologically. The parent should be advised so as to

accept and assist the child accordingly. Children with mental retardation and their parents should be given guidance and counseling on causes of retardation. Implications, skills of daily living and education provision and services available for persons with mental retardation.

**Education Intervention**

The curriculum needs adaptation or adjustments to suit learners with mental retardation.

Adaptation means modifying the content due to the limitation of the mentally retarded in Learning expenses. Some special schools offer an education and usually moderately (trainable). These children usually live at the home with their parents.

The regular public schools, which are now responsible for the education of the all handicapped children, are changing their ways of providing services to retarded students.

The government in conjunction with churches and nongovernmental organizations provides trained teachers and training facilities to support education for children with mental retardation. With inclusive education and education for all, the government of Kenya by 2015 intends to have at least one teacher in every regular school to cater for the needs of children with disabilities including those with mental retardation.

**2.7 Attitude**

**Definition**

Mwaura (2002) defines attitude as positive or negative feelings towards any situation depending on how the community or an individual sees it.

Couther (1995) defines attitude as “a way of thinking about somebody or something.” In this study attitude is the positive or negative inner feelings that derives a person’s behavior towards a person or situation.

### **Traditional beliefs and attitudes towards the mentally retarded**

Ndurumo (1993) cites Payne and Mercer 1975 who stated that the treatment of disability has been through five stages. The first stage was the extermination. During this era, the Greeks and the Romans killed their newly born infants who were found to have physical deformities and severe forms of mental retardation.

During the second era the disabled were ridiculed.

The mental retarded and physically disabled were made court clowns and were used to entertain the privileged class.

During the middle Ages, a social conscience took over. Instead of ridiculing them the church decided to put the disabled in asylums and accorded them humane and charitable care.

The final periods were eras of education and vocational adequacy. These periods stretch to the present. The disabled are perceived as capable of benefiting from education, vocational training, self reliance and other societal norms.

The fate of the disabled in many African countries was dependent upon the cultural practices and beliefs of various communities. Some communities regarded disability to be caused by witchcraft, curses or as a punishment from God for wrongs done. Consequently those with disabilities were isolated and their needs were not adequately provided for by their family. Due to these attitudes, the earliest names had negative connotations such as cripple, idiot, moron and imbecile.

### **Teachers' attitude towards the Mentally Retarded**

Macmillan, (1982) observes that while there are a number of professionals involved in the diagnosis and treatment of the mentally retarded individuals, most research on the attitudes of professionals has focused on teachers.

It has taken on added importance since the publication of the work on expectation since it seemed to demonstrate that a positive teacher expectation can boost the retarded child's

achievements. There is however a parallel concern that negative teacher's expectations can lower achievements (Rosenthal and Jacobson 1968)

Eric (1995) stated that most studies show that teachers, like the general public have negative views of both handicapped students and mainstreaming.

Efran (1967) observed that you might expect that special education teachers would have more favorable attitudes towards the mentally retarded children since they know about retardation and have chosen to work with such children. He reported favorable attitudes by specialized teachers than regular teachers.

However Green and Retish (1973) and Semel (1959) found no difference between special education teachers and the general teachers. Perstein and Bak (1989) summarized the relationship between knowledge and attitudes as follows; "Knowledge of mental retardation is necessary for teachers to have positive attitude towards the mentally but it is not sufficient to ensure that their attitude will be positive".

Teachers are most negative on mainstreaming emotionally disturbed and mentally retarded students. Lack of knowledge about disabilities experience with handicapped students, and training in these types of students appear as major contributors of these attitudes.

## **CHAPTER THREE**

### **RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**

#### **3.0 INTRODUCTION**

In this chapter an attempt was made to describe the research design, the study environment, population, sample size and selection technique. The description of data collection instruments and data presentation and analysis presented.

#### **3.1 RESEARCH DESIGN**

The descriptive method and cross sectional survey was used. This method was chosen to help get information from respondents by use of questionnaires.

#### **3.2 RESEARCH ENVIRONMENT**

The study was conducted in Emulole Base Emasatsi Division, Khwisero district, Kenya. Emulole Base has 15 schools and none special needs units. Due to free primary Education, most children with mental retardation have been admitted to regular schools.

#### **3.3 STUDY POPULATION**

The study obtained information from teachers both male and female from different main stream schools.

#### **3.4 SAMPLE SIZE AND SELECTION TECHNIQUE**

The study used a sample of seven schools out of the fifteen schools. Names of schools were written on pieces of paper and schools picked at random. Seven teachers were picked at random from each school. The entire sample size was 30 respondents.

### **3.5 Instruments of data collection**

The researcher used Interview method and questionnaires that were developed from the research objectives and questions. The research questionnaires comprised of 9 questions, which the researcher had pre tested with a few colleagues.

#### **3.5.1 Questionnaire**

The selection of this tool was guided by the nature of data to be collected as well as the objectives of the study. The sample size was also quite large and given time constraints, questionnaires were the ideal instruments since questions were both open ended and close ended. The use of both open ended and close ended questions made it easy for the respondents to give adequate information.

#### **3.5.2 Interviews**

This method was used to probe for more information about the problem in question and any other information that the researcher had missed to capture in the questionnaire. Teachers were interviewed and this method was essential since the researcher was mainly concerned with opinions, views and perceptions.

### **3.6 Data collection procedure**

Permission to collect the data was sought from the university, and then the respective schools' administrations were requested through letters to allow the researcher conduct a study on the Teacher's attitudes towards mentally retarded learners' in selected inclusive educational settings. The researcher personally delivered the questionnaire to the teachers and conducted face to face interview with other teachers. Two week's time was given to collect distributed questionnaires.

#### **3.7 Data analysis**

The result of the study was analyzed qualitatively and special consideration was teachers' attitudes to the mentally retarded learners. This involved description and narration of information. Research questions were used as guides while analyzing the collected data. Tables



were used to represent the information because they summarized large information in a small space and ease interpretation.

### **3.8 Limitations of the study**

The research study was limited by a number of problems ranging from physical to financial factors like poor conditions of the roads, poor record keeping in teachers, limited time and poor co-operation of some teachers in selected schools.

## CHAPTER FOUR

### DATA PRESENTATION ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

#### 4.0 INTRODUCTION

The study was guided by the following objectives; to find out the prevalence and causes of mental retardation in Emulole Base Emasatsi Division, Khwisero District, Kenya.

To find out teachers knowledge about learners who are mentally retarded and to investigate teachers opinion about educating learners who are mentally retarded.

In this chapter the researcher has collected data in tables and percentages. The researcher has also analyzed and interpreted the information from the findings.

The respondents were 30 from seven schools that were picked randomly; they were 15 male and 15 female. They were very comparative as most of them were teachers familiar to the researcher thus the response rate was 100%,all the questionnaires were returned by hand as the schools were easily accessible to the researcher due to good transport network in the division.

#### 4.1.1 Gender of respondents

TABLE 1: Gender: Male/Female

GENDER	FREQUENCY	PERCENTAGE
Male	15	50%
Female	15	50%
Total	30	100%

Source: primary data 2010

From the table above, out of 30 respondents' in this study 50% were female and 50% were male. This implies that the number of female teachers equivalent to the number of male in Emulole Base Emasatsi Division, Khwisero District. This is due to the government policy to employ teachers in their home districts and areas.

#### 4.2 Knowledge about mentally retarded learners

Teachers should be well equipped with knowledge and skills of handling learners with mental retardation. They should be able to conduct assessment to identify children with mental retardation, the causes in order for correct placement such mild, moderate, severe or profound. This should assist in early intervention measures and skills to be acquired (Ndurumo 1993).

**TABLE 4 Knowledge about Mentally retarded learners.**

DESCRIPTION	FREQUENCY	PERCENTAGE
Identification	12	40%
Causes	9	30%
Prevention and intervention measures	6	20%
Teaching skills in mental retardation	3	10%

*Source: primary data 2010.*

According to the above table 40% of respondents can identify learners who are mentally retarded. This leaves about 30% who had doubts about their ability to do so. This is probably because most of the learners who are mentally retarded have physical indicators such as big head (microcephally) and drooling (uncontrolled saliva). 30% of the respondents said they knew cause of mental retardation. This could be because of the awareness created through seminars and workshops. It could also be because of the stereo type beliefs that many people in the society hold to be true such as witchcraft or curses.

20% of respondents are aware of preventive and intervention measures of mental retardation. This is the same with those aware of teaching skills. The government has put a lot of emphasis on training of teachers in the area of special needs education. This explains why some teachers are aware of the intervention and preventive measures.

#### 4.3 Teachers Opinion about teachers mentally retarded learners.

Payne and Mercer (1975) states that treatment of disability has been through five stages and that the mentally retarded are perceived as capable of benefiting from education, vocational training, self reliance and other societal norms.

Ndurumo (1993) states that the establishment of education assessment resource centres in 1984 brought light awareness on the education of the handicapped in Kenya.

**TABLE 5 Opinion about educating mentally retarded Learners**

DESCRIPTION	FREQUENCY	PERCENTAGE
Right to education	10	33.3%
Waste of funds	9	30%
Educated in special schools	6	20%
Educated in ordinary schools	5	16.7%

*Source: primary data 2010*

From the table above 33.3% felt that the mentally retarded learners have a right to education. However 20% were of the opinion that they should be educated in special schools. This could be because they are incompetent to handle such learners, as most of them lack skills as indicated in table 5.

16.7% were of the view that learners should be educated in ordinary school. This percentage is lower than that of teachers who are trained in special education. This may imply that a certain number of even those trained in special needs would not like to have them in ordinary school. 20% of the respondents felt that educating these learners is a waste of funds. This might be due ignorance or other traditional beliefs.

The government should strive to create awareness on the rights of education to all as disability is not inability.

#### **4.4 Attitudes towards mentally retarded learners.**

McMillan (1982) observes that while there are number of professional involved in the diagnosis and treatment of the mentally retarded individuals, most research on the attitudes of professionals has focused on teachers.

Eric (1995) stated that most studies show that teachers, like the general public have got negative views of both handicapped students and main streaming. However, Green and Retish found no difference between special education teachers and the general teachers.

Perstein and Bak (1989) summaries the relationship between knowledge and attitudes as follows “knowledge of mental retardation is necessary for teachers to have positive attitudes towards mentally retarded but is to sufficient to ensure that their attitude will be positive.”

**TABLE 6: Attitudes towards mentally retarded learners**

DESCRIPTION	FREQUENCY	PERCENTAGE (%)
Equal opportunities	7	23.3
Class performance	10	33.3
Integration	4	13.3
Integration with others	9	30.1

Source: primary data 2009

According to the above table, 23.3% of the respondents said that learners with mental retardation should be given equal opportunities. This could mean there are quite a number of teachers who do not recognize the right of these children. 33.3% of respondents felt that learners who are mentally retarded would lower the performance of the class in they are integrated in ordinary class.

Those who felt that learners who are mentally retarded would mix well with others in ordinary class accounted for 30.1% of the total respondents. This could be because of the presence of special units in some schools and therefore they may have seen these children interact well with their peers during break time.

## **CHAPTER FIVE**

### **SUMMARY OF THE FINDINGS, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

#### **5.0 INTRODUCTION**

This chapter presents the summary of the research, conclusion and recommendation of the study.

The purpose of the study was to assess the teacher's attitude towards mentally retarded learners of Emulole Base Emasatsi Division, Khwisero District, Kenya. Data was collected through use of questionnaire.

#### **5.1 SUMMARY OF THE FINDINGS AND DISCUSSIONS**

The study revealed that teachers in Emulole Base Emasatsi Division, Khwisero District, are aware of existence of learners who are mentally retarded. Despite the awareness a large number of teachers are uncomfortable with the idea of including learners who are mentally retarded in a regular class. Most of the teachers prefer them in special schools. The study also found that a large number of teachers though highly qualified lack the necessary skills in the area of mental retardation.

The study further revealed that a large number of teachers have negative attitudes towards the mentally retarded learners.

Some teachers are aware of teaching skills of the daily living like; toileting, dressing and eating. Most teachers have changed their attitude from the traditional belief that a mentally retarded child was outcast and bad omen and have accepted them the way they are. This could be due to emphasis the government has put in training of teachers in special needs.

However, most teachers have negative attitudes towards the performance of these learners in main stream; they feel incapable of handling them they are after mean score only.

Despite the awareness only a large number of teachers are uncomfortable with the idea of including learners who are mentally retarded in regular class. The study also found out that a large number of teachers though qualified lack the necessary skills in mental retardation.

The government should ensure that teachers should acquire necessary skills through sensitizations in barazas, seminars and work shops in order to handle these children.

## **5.2 CONCLUSION**

From the study it can be concluded that some teachers are aware of the causes of mental retardation and are able to mention some characteristics of a child with mental retardation. Despite these, majority still have negative attitudes towards the mentally retarded and have not accepted them in the ordinary class. This could have been influenced by lack of sufficient knowledge and skills to handle learners who are mentally retarded. Fear that learners with mental retardation could lower performance as they concentrate on mean score.

## **5.3 RECOMMENDATIONS.**

After analyzing the data and making conclusions of the findings the researcher made the following recommendations:

Teachers should be sensitized on mental retardation through barazas, seminars and workshops so that they can be able to identify these children in the community, advise their parents and educate them on early intervention measures.

There is need for government to allow teachers to attend in-service training of teachers on special needs and provide funds to enable them attend the training. This training should equip them with necessary skills in handling all classification s such as mild, moderate or severe. The teachers who pursue special needs and handle the children should be motivated and rewarded with extra allowance.

The government should formulate and enforce policies that ensure that needs of learners who are mentally retarded are met as disability is not inability. They should provide equal employment opportunities to learners who are educable and who achieved vocational training without discrimination.

There is need for more extensive study of teacher's attitudes towards the mentally retarded learners as most teachers have knowledge but have not changed their attitudes as required.

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## APPENDIX

### APPENDIX 1; QUESTIONNAIRES FOR TEACHERS

The questionnaire is intended to assist in gathering data pertaining the Teachers attitudes towards mentally retarded learners' case study: Emulole Base Emasatsi Division, Khwisero district.

Please complete the questionnaire by filling in the appropriate answers in the spaces.

Respond freely and feel to add any other comment.

1. Indicate your gender. Male  Female

2. What is your academic qualification?

K.J.S.E  K.C.S.E  K.C.P.E  K.A.C.E

Graduate

3. Have you ever heard about mental retardation?

Yes  No

4. Are there mentally retarded pupils in your schools?

Yes  No

5. If yes how many are they in your school?

a) 1-5

b) 6-10

c) 11-15

d) 16 and above

6. What are some of their behaviors? Explain

.....  
.....  
.....

7. a) Do you know the causes of mental retardation?

Yes  No

b) If yes, what are the causes?

.....  
.....  
.....

8 a) Should the mentally retarded pupils learn in the main stream classrooms?

Yes  No

b) If yes, give your opinion?

.....  
.....

c) If No what is your opinion?

.....  
.....  
.....

9. a) Are there special needs teachers to handle such learners?

Yes  No

b) If yes, how many are they? Indicate

.....  
.....

# MAP OF KENYA SHOWING WESTERN PROVINCE





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*Office of the Director*

Date: 19 April, 2010

TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN:

EYENGA NIXON OPWAKA Reg.No BED/18198/71/AF

Dear Sir/Madam,

**Re: Research/ Project Writing**

The above named is our student in the Institute of Open and Distance Learning (IODL), pursuing a Bachelors Degree in... Special needs Education.

He/she wishes to carry out his/her research/project study in your Institution.

Project writing / research is a requirement for the award of a Bachelors degree of the University. Any assistance accorded to him/her will be highly appreciated.

Thank you

