

**ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE OF HEARING IMPAIRED LEARNERS IN
REGULAR SCHOOL IN IJARA DISTRICT, KENYA**

BY

ADEN ABDI ALI

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**A RESEARCH REPORT SUBMITTED TO THE INSTITUTE OF OPEN
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DECLARATION

I, Aden Abdi Ali declare that this research project is my original work and has never been submitted for any academic award. Where the works of others have been cited acknowledgment has been made.

Signature..........

Aden Abdi Ali

Date.....

APPROVAL

I certify that the work submitted by this candidate was under my supervision. His work is ready for submission to be evaluated for the award of a Degree in Bachelor of Education in Special Needs Education of Kampala International University.

Sign.....

Ssekajugo Derrick

Date.....18/08/09.....

DEDICATION

I dedicate this research work to my wife Anzal Mohamed Aden for having taken up my responsibilities in my absence.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

My sincere gratitude goes to my supervisor Mr. Ssekajugo Derrick who guided me throughout this study. On the same note, I would like to thank my father Abdi Ali Muhumed and to my mother Nuria Ibrahim Elmi for having paved my way in the world of academia. My children Hamza and ayan, my friend Mohamed A. Farah, I'm greatly indebted to you all.

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ABSTRACT

The impact of free primary education has been manifold and complex. The quality and magnitude of the programme has affected not only the normal physically fit pupil, but also the physically challenged learners in inclusive schools as well as the wider community and society.

The study adopted a quantitative research design. This enhanced the researcher to obtain a better understanding of the problems and impact of free primary education on the quality of special education for the physically disabled learners in Garrisa district, Kenya. The method chosen allowed a collection of comprehensive and intensive data and provided an in-depth understanding of the topic under study.

Information collected was analyzed and edited to create consistency and completeness. After collecting the questionnaires they were edited for completeness and consistency across the respondents and to locate omissions. Information obtained from the research study was presented and analyzed using narratives, and statistical figures.

This report provides suggestions for more effective approach to physically disabled education in the country. It is designed for policy makers, planners and practitioners who have responsibilities in the area of physically disabled education in Kenya.

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background to the study

Deaf education in Kenya falls under the Ministry of Education, special education division. This section of the ministry deals with the administration of education of persons with special educational needs, deaf education being one of them. History of deaf education in Kenya dates back to the founding of Kenya Society for Deaf Children (KSDC) in 1958 and the subsequent establishment of the first two schools for the deaf, Nyangoma and Mumias primary schools for the deaf in western Kenya in 1961. Later Vocational and Technical and academic secondary schools for the deaf girls and boys were set up. The number of students in the schools for the deaf according to KSDC (2001) statistics has tremendously increased over the years from 1,710 in 1982 to 6,000 in the year 2001. No empirical study has been carried out to ascertain reasons for the steady rise but it is speculated that it could either be due to the increasingly high prevalence of diseases causing deafness such as malaria, measles, meningitis or could be due to effective campaigns, awareness and establishment of Educational Assessment and Resource Services (EARS) across the country and the subsequent availability of educational opportunities for the deaf. Despite the improvement, there are still about 30% of deaf children not attending school (KSDC (2001)).

1.1.1 Assessment and school placement

In Kenya, every district has an Educational Assessment and Resource Center (EARC) and before a deaf child is placed in a school for the deaf, he must be screened and

diagnostic assessment carried out on him. Upon entry into a special school, there are two groups of children; those from hearing parents who constitutes 97.9% and have no structured language whether signed or spoken except a few gestures acquired naturally. On the other side of the spectrum is a group of deaf children of deaf parents who constitute about 2.1% and who come to school better adjusted, socialized, have positive attitudes due to developed sign language, cognition and socio-emotional skills critical for education (Adoyo, 2004).

Most deaf children in Kenya join pre-primary classes (Nursery and Infant Classes) at the age of 6 years for two years. A small percentage is identified late and therefore starts school late. In the third year, they move to class (grade) one, which runs up to grade eight at which they sit for a national examination, Kenya Certificate for Primary Education (KCPE), together with their hearing counterparts in regular schools. The only rebate offered is an extra 30 minutes during the examination period. There are two academic secondary schools for the deaf, one for the deaf girls and the other for the boys who qualify to proceed for secondary education. The universities in Kenya have no interpreting services for the deaf. The few deaf graduates in Kenya studied overseas e.g. in America.

Changes in the education systems in Kenya has been closely linked to tendencies and changes occurring in Western countries especially Britain which enacted integration in their education policy way back in 1981 and where most of the pioneers of special education in Kenya took their training. There has been heated debates and international pressure on the introduction of inclusive settings in schools where deaf and hearing children are taught in the same classrooms. The issue that supports the need for this

research is how teachers in an inclusive setting can manage such a class with hearing and non-hearing children and at the same time ensure there is no one who is left behind in the system while geared towards providing quality education for all. One of the greatest challenges in an inclusive classroom and which is of concern in this paper is managing students with hearing impairments in an inclusive setting.

1.2 Statement of the problem

One of the greatest challenges in an inclusive classroom and which is of concern in this paper is managing students with hearing impairments in an inclusive setting and the challenges faced by the deaf students. The study looked at the academic challenges of educating deaf children in an inclusive setting from the educator's point of view. Contribution to the study was from 20 teachers in Ijara district. The findings of this study should contribute to the advancement of Knowledge in the area of Inclusive Schooling and its implementation while facilitating further research in the same or related field.

1.3 Purpose of the study

The study aimed at investigating the academic challenges encountered in placing the deaf/hearing impaired in an inclusive classroom. It is believed that, although the advocacy rate for inclusiveness is high the overall objective of the program of fostering friendship and academic performance may be hampered in the long run due to challenges at hand. It is therefore justifiable to investigate on these challenges and provide recommendations and guidelines to all stakeholders especially the educators concerned with the implementation of the policy in management of a deaf child in an inclusive setting.

1.4 Objectives of the study

- To examine the academic performance of hearing impaired learners in regular schools.
- To assess the challenges of educating deaf children in an inclusive setting.
- To suggest possible remedies to the problems faced by teachers and administrators handling hearing impaired learners in regular school.

1.5 Research questions

- How is the academic performance of hearing impaired learners in regular schools?
- What challenges are faced in educating deaf children in an inclusive setting?
- What are the solutions to the problems facing teachers and administrators handling hearing impaired learners in inclusive school?

1.6 Significance of the study

The study aims at emphasizing the need of providing quality special needs education even though there is need and advocacy in support of Inclusive Setting. The study will also contribute relevant information to both the government and key stakeholders (community, donors, and educators) in the implementation of inclusive learning plans and policies in the Kenyan education sector. Educators will be able to know the major challenges posed and necessary options available to enable a positive learning environment.

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.0 Introduction

This section reviews the existing literature by major authors that are acknowledged and tries to bring out information on the deaf/hearing impaired disability to contribute to an understanding of what the research is all about.

2.1 The Hearing impaired

Webster's Dictionary (1998) defines a deaf person is a person who is deprived of the power of hearing. However according to Helen Keller National Center For Deaf And Blind (2006), a deaf person is that who has a chronic hearing impairment so severe that most speech cannot be understood with optimum amplification, or a progressive hearing loss having a prognosis leading to this condition; and for whom the impairment causes extreme difficulty in attaining independence in daily life activities, achieving psychosocial adjustment, or obtaining a vocation;

The Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), formerly the Education of the Handicapped Act (P.L. 94-142), includes "hearing impairment" and "deafness" as two of the categories under which children with disabilities may be eligible for special education and related service programming. While the term "hearing impairment" is often used generally to describe a wide range of hearing losses, including deafness, the regulations for IDEA define hearing loss and deafness separately.

Hearing impairment is defined by IDEA as "an impairment in hearing, whether

permanent or fluctuating, that adversely affects a child's educational performance."

Deafness is defined as "a hearing impairment that is so severe that the child is impaired in processing linguistic information through hearing, with or without amplification."

Thus, deafness may be viewed as a condition that prevents an individual from receiving sound in all or most of its forms. In contrast, a child with a hearing loss can generally respond to auditory stimuli, including speech.(NICCHY Fact Sheet Number 3 (FS3), January 2001)

Hearing loss or deafness does not affect a person's intellectual capacity or ability to learn. However, children who are either hard of hearing or deaf generally require some form of special education services in order to receive an adequate education. Such services may include:

- regular speech, language, and auditory training from a specialist;
- amplification systems;
- services of an interpreter for those students who use manual communication;
- favorable seating in the class to facilitate speech reading;
- captioned films/videos;
- assistance of a note taker, who takes notes for the student with a hearing loss, so that the student can fully attend to instruction;
- instruction for the teacher and peers in alternate communication methods, such as sign language; and

2.1.1 Problems of hearing-impaired Children and Adults

In many everyday situations, good hearing is an ability persons not afflicted by hearing impairments are only marginally aware of. They can participate in a conversation while at the same time performing other activities such as eating, doing manual work, or mentally filtering and note taking of the conversation. (Regenspurger, O. (1989)

Hearing-impaired persons are not able to divide their attention in this manner while listening. For such persons, the strain of acoustically understanding what is being said largely demands their full concentration and all of their intellectual energy. Anyone who has ever tried to follow a conversation in a foreign language knows what this means.

A hearing-impaired child's road to adulthood is in many ways more difficult than that of a child with normal hearing. Learning to speak, attending school, defining one's social role and self-assertion are several examples of this. The hearing-impaired child is constantly under pressure to satisfy the same demands as children with normal hearing. While deaf children usually grow up in a protected environment, hearing-impaired children are almost universally assessed according to the same standards as children with normal hearing. Once they have been fitted with a hearing instrument, they usually have to attend regular schools and cope with a world full of people with normal hearing. (Kammerer, E. (1988)

2.1.2 Psychological Consequences of Hearing Impairments

Hearing impairments may result in serious psychological problems among children and adults, e.g.:

- * Identity problems

- * Exhaustion
- * Loss of joy of life and social competence
- * Loss of confidence
- * Discouragement

2.1.2.1 Identity Problems

Hearing-impaired children who attend a regular school feel compelled to satisfy the same requirements as all other children. They adapt their personal goals and standards to conform to those of the majority, thus thrusting their own identity into the background. This situation gives rise to many demands which can be fulfilled only at the price of considerable sacrifices and disappointments. Children, teenagers and adults who initially possessed an intact sense of hearing and who had a normal mental, intellectual and social development, may as a result of an infection, lose the hearing ability partially or completely. Their emotional integrity is more vulnerable than that of those who from the very beginning grew up with a hearing impairment and therefore adjusted their needs and goals based on the restrictions imposed by this handicap. Apparently it seems more painful to lose an asset that we once possessed versus losing something that was never there to begin with. (Richtberg, W. (1980) This situation is also referred to as a loss of identity, which provides a starting point for the psychotherapy of hearing-impaired patients.

2.1.2.2 Exhaustions

The hearing impaired has to be extremely alert in all communicative situations to prevent the situation from passing them by and from being left out of happenings. They must be "all ears" to understand what's being said, and yet can never fully trust their ears. This

life style is very strenuous and characteristically leads to general exhaustion among the persons affected.

2.1.2.3 Loss of Joy of Life and Social Competences

Chronic exhaustion often leads to a general loss of one's joy of life, optimism and vigor. Especially the hearing-impaired facing strong challenges in their careers and families exhibit these psychosomatic characteristics. This has been indicated by experiences in daily practice and by the results of scientific studies.

Hearing impairment often proves to be an isolating handicap. This is due to the fact that, despite physical closeness to other people, a feeling of loneliness can nevertheless arise whenever communication with those persons becomes difficult or is disrupted. The hearing-impaired are familiar with this seemingly paradox situation from their disappointing encounters with normal hearing. This may occur when, in a meeting at the office, while casually chatting at a local pub, or at a family get-togethers, others, through their thoughtlessness, fail to use the necessary consideration, the hearing impaired thus temporarily loses his sense of belonging to the group.

2.1.2.4 Loss of Confidence

People who can never be certain if they have understood something correctly, if they are understood by others, or if others correctly interpreted misunderstandings, often gradually lose their self-confidence. What this means can best be appreciated by reflecting on the role that trust plays in our lives. Every day we get involved in a number of situations and responsibilities which involve a certain risk of failure or human error. Trust protects us against unnecessary doubts, fears and checks. But, what happens when one's confidence in one's own capabilities, competence and personal appeal is shaken? Things which

would otherwise be merely a matter of course become impossible and all possible courses of action are then overridden by doubt and anxiety.

2.1.2.5 Discouragement

The difficulties described above frequently lead to overwhelming and disappointing experiences (possibly manifested in the characteristic discouragement syndrome) more among the hearing-impaired than among people with normal hearing. (Richtberg, W. (1990):

2.2 Inclusive setting

The term inclusive education has attracted much attention in the recent years. Inclusive Education has been misconstrued by many to be some kind of special approach that seeks to accommodate children with disabilities in the mainstream education. In as much as this may be valid to some extent, it is not the focus and thrust of inclusive Education (IE). An examination of the theory and practice has revealed that the term has come to mean different things to different people. According to UNESCO (2005), the term refers to the diversity of needs of all learners through increased curriculum content, approaches, structures and strategies, with a common vision which covers all children of the appropriate age range and a conviction that it is the responsibility of the regular system to educate all children. It is a process of reforming schools and attitudes, which ensures that every child receives quality and appropriate education within the regular schools. In this way, inclusion is more complex than mere physical placement of children with special needs in the regular classroom.

The core focus of Inclusive Education is best described in the words of Heijnen E. (Bangladesh 2002): “Inclusive Education looks into how to transform the mainstream education system in order to respond to different learners in a constructive and positive way.”

As Jenkins, Pious & Jewell, (1990) put it, inclusion implies that the regular classroom should change to accommodate all different learners and in the process, desirable services be offered to all children within the regular classroom. One major assumption is that in an inclusive setting, the classroom teacher rather than the special needs educator has the primary responsibility for educating all children in the classroom.

How therefore does inclusion differ from the related terms such as mainstreaming and integration? Integration as explained by Jenkins, Pious & Jewell (1990), means that the child adapts to the regular classroom whereas in inclusion, the regular classroom adapts to the child’s needs. Conceptually in inclusion deaf children are members of the regular classroom. Antia & Stinson (1999) provide a broad but equally simple definition, which considers inclusion as the practice of educating the child with special needs and the “normal” child in the regular classrooms, while integration refers to the results of such practice.

Friend & Bursuck (1996) have reiterated that in order to make the classroom inclusive for all learners, regular teachers should work in partnership with special needs educators to make adaptations in the curriculum and to structure the classroom in a manner that allows for effective learning by a diverse group of learners. Inclusion means enabling all

students to participate fully in the life and work of mainstream settings, whatever their needs. For inclusive education to be effective, governments, schools and all stakeholders have to adapt their approach to curriculum, teaching support, funding mechanism and the built environment. Biklen, Lehr, Searl, & Taylor, (1978) have identified some of the philosophical premises that advocate for inclusion and these include; preparing individuals for life, learning from typical peers, having normal life experiences, changing attitudes of individuals without disabilities, challenging societal rejection and teaching democracy.

Inclusion involves adopting a broad vision of Education For All (EFA) by addressing the spectrum of needs of learners, including those who are vulnerable and marginalized such as the abused, refugees, migrants, language minority, ethnic minority, and children of conflict zones, children with disabilities, nomadic children and HIV/AIDS orphans. Millennium Development Goals (MDG) on Education also provide a framework of reference on making EFA a reality by 2015 while the Salamanca Statement on the principles, policy and practice in special needs education has also provided valuable reference points for inclusive education as it provides a framework for thinking about how to move the policy into practice.

At the core of inclusive education is also the human right to education, pronounced in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights in 1949. A logical consequence of these rights is that all children have the rights to receive the kind of education that does not discriminate on any grounds such as caste, ethnicity, religion, economic status, refugee status, language, gender and disability. Specifically the rights include access to free and

compulsory education, equality, inclusion, non-discrimination, the right to quality education, content and learning process.

2.3 Deaf children in an inclusive setting

Including deaf children in mainstream schools has been an extremely complex, controversial and contentious issue across the globe. Many deaf adults in deaf communities across the world have campaigned for the rights of deaf children to be educated separately in special schools in which they can access information through their most natural first language, Sign Language, the language of the deaf community.

A pragmatic question that needs an answer is whether special needs educators and regular classroom teachers can work in an equal partnership to provide deaf children with relevant and adequate education within the regular classroom. Further, to what extent can the classroom practice be modified to optimize the deaf child's academic and social integration, considering that the ideal of inclusive education is a student who is well integrated both academically and socially? The basic problems faced when deaf and hearing students are educated together according to Antia and Stinson (1999) are lack of mutual access to communication.

Arguing against the move to place deaf children in an inclusive class, Kaupinnen (1994) has pointed out that the fundamental goal of educating deaf children is not actually to "normalize" or to be the same but to provide the deaf with the same possibilities of participating in the society in adult life. The then World Federation of the Deaf (WFD) secretary general reiterated that because of the special communicative consequences of

deafness, deaf people risk being isolated if they are put together with hearing pupils who do not know how to sign and that a deaf individual has no chance of real participation if he is surrounded by people who do not know how to sign. According to Kaupinnen including a deaf child in a regular system increases his handicap.

Liu, Saur & Long (1996) have reported deaf children in inclusive settings experiencing a number of problems some of which include; rapid rate at which tasks in the classroom are discussed, abrupt and quick turn taking in the discussions, rapid change of the conversational theme or topic, the high numbers of speakers involved in a group discussion. These may create difficulties in the control of the communication cop and may result in the deaf not benefiting from the group discussion.

Although a section of hearing-impaired students (especially the post-lingually deaf and those who are hard of hearing) can be educated with their hearing counterparts in public schools, Antia & Stinson (1999) have empirically documented that the outcomes of the academic and social integration are not satisfactory. It has been pointed out that there are some difficulties that are inherent in inclusive practices such as the regular classroom teachers who possess negative attitude towards inclusion. Further, although the rationale of inclusion is to foster friendship and provide access to full curriculum, Jones (2006), has reported that this only works for some deaf groups of children where there are viable groups to support and befriend one another and where they are nurtured in communicating naturally in signs. It has also been noted that placing a deaf child in a regular classroom requires increased instructional, collaboration and management demands on the part of the regular classroom teacher. According to Antia & Stinson

(1999), there is a dire need for a true culture of collaboration between the teacher of the deaf and the regular teacher. The exact nature of the collaboration as observed by Antia and Stinson is influenced by the culture of the instruction and can be impossible when collaboration is not valued or actively pursued.

The benefit of collaboration and teaming according to Antia and Stinson (1999) is that both the classroom teacher and the specialist teacher of the deaf can broaden their perspectives and can examine their stereotypes about their students and classrooms. The process develops students' expectations based on their shared abilities rather than their differences. The perceived equality of status between teachers is an essential component for successful collaboration.

Recent research have emphasized the importance of deep meaningful learning that is associated with hypothesis construction, problem solving and conceptual organization as opposed to memorization and retention of facts. This kind of learning has been found to be more effective in in-group activity discussions. The inability of deaf children to discuss and communicate academic issues easily in spoken language in an inclusive setting may make group participation for the deaf, even with an interpreter difficult, a situation, which may affect learning and final academic success.

2.4 The situation of inclusion in Kenya

A number of countries in the North have drummed up support for inclusive education and the idea is rapidly penetrating Kenyan education system. The Kenyan government is

currently documenting inclusion in its policy framework and has provisionally projected availability of at least one special needs educator in every institution of learning by the year 2015. The question is whether this will be possible in a country where material resources required for this undertaking might be limited, given that inclusion requires adaptations of the structures to fit the learners needs.

It is encouraging to see the government making great strides in meeting the goals of the Jomtien Conference, Education For All (EFA,1990) through the free primary education initiative and ensuring that children with disabilities are accepted in schools. There are also deliberate strides in the same vein to formulate an inclusive education policy.

The government has started to show goodwill towards special needs in the country. In its recurrent expenditure, it voted a special needs fund for each school for purposes of environmental adaptation. These funds are however far from adequate. The Government of Kenya has gone further specifically for the inclusive education projects - Oriang Cheshire Inclusive Education Project Schools. Project schools received 151,000 Kenya Shillings for adaptive aids and environmental management. Even so, there is still some ground that has to be covered through private, community and government initiative. Deaf children for example cannot be fully amalgamated in the inclusive setting if sign language is limited to schools.

There are a few international private inclusive schools in Nairobi. The only known public inclusive programme in Kenya is the Oriang Inclusive Project in western Kenya, which coordinates five regular schools. The pilot project is supported by Cheshire International from the United Kingdom. A recent visit to the project however revealed that 80% of the

students included in these schools were physically handicapped. There were a few partially deaf, and a handful of those with low vision and mild mental disabilities. I would have loved to see deaf children with spoken language communication difficulties. According to the project manager, all was well except the news that the Cheshire International would soon be leaving creating project sustainability problem. It was difficult to assess the impact of the programme on the academic performance, as those who started with the project had not done the national examination.

2.5 Challenges faced in academic performance

Curriculum is one of the obstacles or tools that need to be carefully designed and adapted in order to facilitate the development and implementation of a proper inclusive system. It facilitates the development of more inclusive settings when it leaves room for the center of learning or when the individual teacher makes adaptations to enhance sense in the local context for the individual learner.

Special institutions in Kenya follow the regular curriculum, which is extensive and demanding, centrally designed and rigid, leaving little flexibility for adaptations for teachers to try out new approaches. The timing for the completion of the curriculum is also unrealistic for the deaf people as the teaching and learning processes are slowed down due to the processes involved.

Commenting during a Kenyan television interview on April 27th 2007, one of the leaders from the nomadic Northeastern province of Kenya demanded a curriculum, which takes cognizance of their origin, culture, lifestyle and their values. He further observed that the

curriculum should be flexible and be able to facilitate and responds to their children's diversities and that it should provide diverse opportunities for practice and performance in terms of content, methods and levels of communication. Kenya needs to emulate Uganda, which has designed a curriculum for its semi-nomadic cattle keepers living in North Eastern Uganda. In Uganda, the Education Strategic Investment Plan 1998-2003 includes a strategic priority of access and equity in education. It is reported that the introduction of the Universal Primary Education programme in 1996 has led to much higher numbers of learners with special educational receiving mainstream education.

Although there are serious discussions and campaigns towards inclusive education, an interview with the Kenyan Deaf community focus group on March 2nd 2007 at the Kenyan National Association for the Deaf office revealed that they were apprehensive of inclusion and foresaw the following fears and challenges for a deaf child in an inclusive class:

- That a deaf child in an inclusive class may lack attention from the teacher as the number of pupils in the regular classes is normally high due to free primary education.
- That due to the broad regular curriculum, adaptation to fit the needs of those who are deaf might be difficult.
- That because schools in Kenya are ranked according to the mean scores obtained in national examinations, regular head teachers may be uncomfortable with the deaf for fear of lowering their mean scores based on the low expectations also expressed by Johnson et al (1989). The group claims that in the past some schools

for the deaf were denied examination registration of candidates by the district education officers for fear of lowering the schools mean scores.

- That although deaf people have now and again cited difficulty in learning a second spoken language there is fear that once a deaf child is placed in a regular classroom he/she will be forced to take Kiswahili, a second language in the national examinations.
- Those teachers in special schools have negative attitudes towards learning Kenyan Sign language. This results in incompetence in the medium of instruction and once placed in a regular classroom, they may find it difficult to convey the curriculum content effectively.
- That parents have the rights to choose where their children learn and since many of the parents still view deafness as a curse, they might find it difficult to have their children share classes with their deaf counterparts.
- That Kenya has acute shortage of sign language interpreters. It may be very difficult to supply adequate interpreters in regular schools in Kenya to assist the deaf.
- That lack of social and academic interactions due to language barrier may lead to isolation and loneliness on the part of the deaf.

CHAPTER THREE

METHODOLOGY

3.0 Introduction

This part of the study was concerned with the way the study was conducted. It gave a detailed explanation of the methods of data collection and analysis. It also talks about the geographical area, population sample, and the strategy to be used in the sampling process.

3.1 Research approach

The researcher adopted explanatory, descriptive and analytical research approach.

3.2 The geographical area

The research was conducted in Ijara district Kenya.

3.3 Population of the study

The population of the study was composed of teachers, from Ijara district and they will be chosen randomly at convenience.

3.4 Sampling strategy

The researcher used simple random sampling method to choose a sample size 20 teachers who participated in the research.

3.5 Data collection method

The researcher basically used primary and secondary sources of data to gather information on the study. For primary source the researcher used questionnaires, while for secondary sources the researcher used the existing literature on the same field.

3.6 Research instruments

The researcher specifically used questionnaires in collecting data.

3.7 Data analysis

Simple quantitative techniques such as percentages were used to derive logical and informative findings, coupled with tables and descriptive statistics which helped in coming up with a comprehensive conclusion and recommendation.

CHAPTER FOUR

DATA PRESENTATION, ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

4.1 Introduction

In this chapter, the researcher analyzed the findings of the study. The findings were presented in tables which showed category, frequency and percentages from the tally of each response. They were also presented in graphs, and a few were translated in tables.

Table 4.1 Professional qualification

Category	Frequency	Percentage
Primary	14	70%
S.N.E Diploma	4	20%
Untrained Teachers	2	10%
S.N.E Degree	-	0%
Total	20	100%

Source: Primary data 2009

The study findings in table 4. 1 shows that majority of teachers are of primary one (PL),as shown by 70 % response. Those with special needs Diploma qualification were represented by 20 %, while those without any training were by 10 % of teaching fraternity. There was no teacher with a degree in special needs education. These are disturbing analysis for a zone that would like to be recognized in education circles.

Primary I teachers are trained to teach ‘normal’ children but not learners with some special needs. The Diploma S.N.E trained teachers are few and their impact would be minimal compared to the number of schools in the division and specifically in the zone.

Table 4.2 Most common problems in classes

Category	Frequency	Percentage
Short attention span	10	50%
Lack of concentration	5	25 %
Memory and recall	3	15 %
Frequent absenteeism Total	2	10 %
Total	20	100 %

Source: Primary data 2009

Results of the findings in table 4.2 show that short attention span problems are dominant in most classes with 50 % respondents citing it. This was followed by lack of concentration problems registering 25 % of respondents’ choices. Problem of learners with memory recall was cited by 15 % of respondents while problems of frequent absenteeism had a 10 % response from teachers. It is clear that most learners have one problem or the other which hinders them from progressive learning. This further translates in challenges for teachers as these are barriers to learning and development. To handle these problems would require the expertise of skilled teachers without which most

learners would always lag behind.

Table 4.3 Teachers choice for intervention on problems listed

Category	Frequency	Percentage
Enforce lessons using Cain	6	30%
Use relevant resources	6	30%
Unit facts teaching	4	20%
Frequent lesson repeats	4	20%
Total	20	100%

Source: Primary data 2009

The findings table 4.3 on teachers intervention choices show that enforcing lesson by use of the Cain and letting pupils learn at their own pace were preferred intervention measures. These were indicated by 30 % response for the former and 30 % for the latter. 20 % of respondents preferred unit facts teaching as a good intervention measure, while another 20 % of respondents preferred frequent repeat of lessons. It is seen in the above analysis, the researcher doesn't agree on use of Cain as an intervention measure, in fact the Cain is punitive rather than corrective. The choice where pupils are let to learn at own pace can only be effective under guidance of structured lessons, while frequent lesson repeats could be preferred, although it has the danger of tiring pupils. Unit facts

teaching is usually most effective, as learners move forward after mastering given units.

Table 4.4 Comments on teaching of Mathematics concepts in primary 7 and 8

Category	Frequency	Percentage
Confusing	0	50%
Difficult	6	30%
Manageable	4	20 %
Total	20	100 %

Source: Primary data 2009

Analysis of Table 4.4 above shows that 50% of respondents find it confusing teaching mathematical concepts in primary 7 and 8. Another 30 % of respondents find it difficult while only 20 % indicated they can manage. This translates to a decision that because of the teaching being confusing or difficult, many learners specifically those with learning problems would find learning complications in Maths, as teachers who are supposed to teach them are themselves poor according to findings.

Table 4.5 Teachers choice on correct description of the Kenyan Primary school curriculum

Category	Frequency	Percentage
Discriminate S.N.E learners	10	50%
Well structured for all learners	10	50%
Total	20	100 %

Source: Primary data 2009

The responses in table 4.5 show that 50% of teachers believe the curriculum discriminates SN. learners, while 50 % of teachers believe it is well structured for all learners, Experiences as a teacher confirms what the respondents have indicated, that it discriminates special needs learners. This is true as the no part of the primary school curriculum has any provision for special needs learners. It leaves out such important areas such as the I.E.P or mediated learning experience nor does it explain how to teach a hearing impaired or cerebral palsied learners, to mention only a few.

Table 4.6 Learners in class having problems such as sight, hearing, communication that interferes with their learning

Category	Frequency	Percentage
Yes	100%	100%
No	-	0%
Total	20	100%

Source: Primary data 2009

According study findings in table 4.6, all respondents were in agreement that there were learners with special needs problems in their classes that hindered their learning and development.

Table 4.7 teacher's opinion on whether 35 min allocation per lesson is enough as per curriculum

Category No	Frequency	Percentage
No	20	100%
Yes	-	0%
Total	20	100%

Source: Primary data 2009

According to findings in table 4.7 above, all teachers were in agreement that the 35 mm allocated per lesson in the present curriculum is not enough. This was shown by 100 % response for “No” it is true. This cannot be enough given the fact that some learners are slow in learning because of various learning problems they may be having.

Table 4.8 opinion on the truth about few teachers being competent in teaching S.N.E learners

Category No	Frequency	Percentage
Yes	16	80%
No	4	20%
Total	20	100%

Source: Primary data 2009

The study finding in table 4.8 above had 80 % of respondents indicating it was true that few teachers were competent. But 20 % of teachers indicated that it wasn't true. The reality is that since most teachers were of primary I professional grades, they would not be competent enough since they didn't have special needs education training which provide for specialized training on S.N.E, The findings in the above table only strengthened the truth, apart from the 20 % respondents who according to the findings elsewhere in the study had special needs education.

Table 4.9 Co-operation from parents in matters of learning involving their children

Category	Frequency	Percentage
Yes	10	50%
No	10	50%
Total	20	100%

Source: Primary data 2009

According to the study findings in table 4.9 regarding parents' co-operation in matters of their children's learning, 50% indicated that parents do co-operate while 50% indicated otherwise. For their children to gain from a good learning atmosphere with teachers' love and respect, cooperation is vital, since it is a reciprocation of good relationships that set the best learning environment for children. Co-operation would involve discussion on children's needs and requirements that can be facilitated by both sides.

Table 4.10 Intervention methods mostly used by teachers

Category	Frequency	Percentage
Extended teaching hours	10	50%
Involving other teachers	5	25%
Use appropriate teaching methods	4	20%
Involving parents	1	5%
Total	20	100%

Source: Primary data 2009

The study finding in table 4.10 came out with the following facts. As high as 50 % of teachers extend teaching hours to help learners. Still 25 % of teachers *involve* other teachers to help them. While 20% of respondents indicated use of appropriate teaching methods. Some teachers indicated that they involve parents to help in their finding solutions that can help learners (5 %).

Table 4.12 Responses as to whether children have enough homework to adequately occupy them

Category	Frequency	Percentage
Yes	18	90%
No	2	10%
Total	20	100%

Source: Primary data 2009

Most parents according to the finding in table 4.12 indicated that their children do not have enough work for homework as represented by 80 % response, against 20 % response for parents who indicated otherwise. Children are therefore idle at home and to improve would require a change in the trend. It poses challenges to teachers as with an involved curriculum, teachers would find it difficult to cover it.

Table 4.13 Out standing reason for children's perform poorly

Category	Frequency	Percentage
Teachers not serious	14	70%
Children don't work hard	2	10%
Over enrolled classes	3	15%
Too many subjects	2	5%
Total	20	100%

Source: Primary data 2009

Most respondents cited teachers as not being serious as a reason for children's poor performance as shown by 70 % parent's response. There could be a lot of truth on the probability of teachers not being serious with their teaching. It compromises learning especially with learning difficulties.

Table 4.14 Suggested Remedies to problems of SNE learners

Category	Frequency	Percentage
Understand learners problem first	14	70%
Have specialized training	4	20%
Involve learners in practical work	2	10%
Total	20	100%

Source: Primary data 2009

According to the findings in table 4. 14, many parents suggested that teachers understand learners problems to enable them improve performance as shown by 70 % response from parents. Other parents (20%) suggested specialized training for teachers, while some (10%) preferred that teachers involve learners in practical work. Those are effective suggestions of concerned parents and backed by the researcher. Teaching alone without remedial plans aimed at improving performance would not help learners with learning difficulties.

CHAPTER FIVE

DISCUSSION, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.0 Introduction

In this chapter, the researcher discusses the findings of the study by identifying major findings. These are compared with the findings of previous studies by other researchers. .

5.1 Discussion

The major obstacle to helping learners with special needs such as those with learning difficulties is the shortage of teachers trained in special needs. The findings in this study found out that majority of teachers do not have the necessary professional qualifications useful in addressing problems of special needs, since majority of teachers are Primary trained. This category of teachers cannot effectively teach learners with special needs as their training in college did not have in their curriculum special needs. This fact is also detailed by Mwaura (2002) who suggests that Primary I teachers (and they are the majority) advance their training by joining such institutions as Kenya Institute of Special Education.

The study also found out that teachers have problems because learners themselves have serious problems of short attention span, lack of concentration, memory and recall and absenteeism. This puts into dis-array major efforts by teachers in trying to make meaningful advancement in helping children. The learning problems by such learners makes it difficult also for teachers to carry out many programmes as they have to first correct the problems by putting in place corrective procedures such as dealing with

memory recall, attention deficit,

It was seen from the findings that some teachers as a method of intervention preferred use of the Cain to enforce lessons. The researcher does not agree with this for obvious reasons that it does not serve any purpose except as a punishment for not grasping facts taught. It is antisocial. The researcher agrees with other intervention strategies from the findings such as use of relevant resources and unit facts teaching. This is also recommended by Ndurumo (1993) who elaborates on task analysis method where a task is carried out in units till the whole task is completed. The findings of the study also suggest that as a measure before planning intervention teachers should understand learner's problems first. This is backed by Erkwall (1989) who opinions that learners may have many problems such as those of understanding concepts, in languages exercises or Mathematics, hearing or sight, which may hinder efforts made by teachers in planned instructions.

The curriculum for primary schools has been criticized for being punitive to both learners and teachers. The study finding came out with facts that the 35 minutes allocation for a lesson was not enough to carry out effective teaching and learning. This is confirmed by the Kenya Teacher Magazine (June 2003). The comments in the magazine is to the effect that not one single / class in primary school ever finished the yearly work planned in the syllabus extracted from the curriculum.

The study findings indicated that most teachers were not competent. Mathematics teachers for upper primary classes (7 and 8) as the majority admitted that some concepts were confusing while other concepts were difficult, only a few admitted that they were

comfortable with the concepts.

5.2 Conclusion

The study revealed that there is a big shortage of special needs trained teachers as majority of teachers in the zone are of Primary I professional grades and do not have enough skill, expertise or knowledge to teach learners with special needs such as those with learning difficulties.

It was also revealed that teachers to be effective and for learners to gain from instructions, teachers need to understand learners problems, individual needs and what effective methods to use when teaching after establishing learners needs. This applies specifically when facilitating language exercises. Most teachers according to the findings were not competent Mathematics teachers as they didn't have knowledge of Mathematics concepts for upper primary classes, forcing the use of inappropriate teaching methods devoid of required knowledge.

5.3 Recommendations

The researcher had the following recommendations to make, based on the study findings:

There is greater need for teachers to have relevant skills and expertise in handling learners with distinctive special problems such as attention deficit problems, concentration, memory and recall problems. These need special attention to help learners move in par with the class, and minimize teaching challenges, skills and expertise should

come from seminars and workshops for teaching improvement.

Teachers should also use and explore modern teaching techniques such as unit facts teaching, I.E.P and mediated learning experiences that have now proved successful. In order to reach all learners regardless of problems they may have.

The lack of trained special needs teachers and their shortage in schools, poses a challenge for the Government to train more teachers for special needs education. There is also need for District education offices to organize workshops and seminars for special needs training. This would help to give teachers relevant skills and knowledge in handling all cases in children's learning.

The subject of curriculum should be looked into by Kenya Institute of Education; variations, correction, moderation, overhauling and having specialized curriculums for different categories of special needs learning. The content of the curriculum should be reduced to what teachers can manage to teach, while time allocation for a lesson should be increased through the curriculum from 35 minutes to 50 minutes. This should give more work time especially in subjects like Mathematics, which is usually slow and difficult to teach.

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APPENDICES

APPENDIX A

QUESTIONNAIRE FOR RESPONDENTS

Dear Respondent,

This questionnaire is designed to help the researcher Aden Abdi Ali, examine academic performance of hearing impaired learners in regular school. You are kindly requested to answer the questions to the best of your knowledge. The information given will be handled with maximum confidentiality.

Personal Information

A) Gender

a) Male

b) Female

B) Level of Education

a) Professional certificate

b) Diploma

c) Degree

d) Masters

C) Age

20—25

25-30

30-35

35-40

40-45

45-50

Outline the benefits:

a)

b)

c)

4. Should deaf children who can benefit from inclusive setting be allowed in regular classrooms while those who may not fully benefit like the profoundly deaf be placed in special institutions?

Yes ()

No ()

5. Are there academic challenges facing an inclusive of setting of education?

Yes () No ()

Outline the challenges-

a)

b)

c)

6. Are teachers equipped with necessary skills to facilitate lessons in an inclusive setting?

Yes ()

No ()

Outline the challenges

a).....

.....

b).....

c).....

.....
7. Are teachers equipped with sign language in order to communicate with deaf children appropriately?

Yes () No ()

8. Do you support the idea of an inclusive setting of education?

Yes () No ()

Why

a).....

b).....

c).....
.....

Thank you.