

LEARNING CONDITIONS OF PUPILS WITH MENTAL
DISABILITIES IN REGULAR PRIMARY SCHOOLS
IN AMUKURA ZONE, AMUKURA DIVISION
TESO DISTRICT
KENYA

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DECLARATION

I, Makokha M Marcelline Adm. No. BED/SNE/13508/61/DF, here by declare that this research report is my own original work and not a duplication of similarly published work of any scholar for academic purposes as partial requirement of any institution of Higher learning for the award of a certificate, diploma or degree in any field of study. I further declare that all materials cited in this paper which are not my own, have been duly acknowledged.

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APPROVAL

This is to certify that the candidate has fully done her research and it is ready for submission to the institute of Open and Distance Learning for the award of a bachelor of Education Degree in Special Needs.

Signed..........

Date: 15/9/08.....

Supervisor

DEDICATION

I dedicate this work to my family members especially my husband Mr. Awunya Denis, my children Mourine, Irene and Innocent. Not to forget my dear brothers and sisters for their moral and Physical support they gave to me and finally my dear friend Odeke Felix for the material and financial assistance, May God bless them all.

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I wish to sincerely thank the Kampala International University teaching staff and in particular my supervisor Dr. J.S. Owoeye for the guidance, suggestions and comments that have led to the success of this study.

I also thank my dear brother Mr. Magero John who assisted me both morally and financially to make my research paper a success finally I am grateful to Mr. and Mrs. Odeke for successfully doing the arduous task of typing the research draft and correction of the final copy.

ABSTRACT

The study sought to investigate the challenges facing inclusion of learners with mental impairments in regular public primary schools in Amukura zone, Teso District Kenya. The major variables identified were effects of curriculum content, the learning resources, teacher's attitude and effects of peer attitude on the inclusion of learners with mental impairments in public primary schools

The researcher used quantitative approach to collect and analyze the data. She used the survey research design in conducting the study. This was convenient in collecting data from many respondents in a wide area. Her target population was 180 teachers from 22 primary schools. The sample size was 18 teachers from 6 schools using probability sampling. Her research tool was a questionnaire which has 9 main questions. They were closed ended where one has to tick the correct option. Others were open ended whereby the respondents explained their ideas. Some questions were matrix type (containing all the two parts)

The study that there is need to create awareness in the school community about inclusion of learners with special needs in regular public schools in order to change their attitude. There is need for the curriculum developers to be considered and give a differentiated curriculum that can be used for learners with mental impairments. Regular teachers should be given seminars or workshops to help them handle learners with special needs in education appropriately. The teacher training colleges curriculum should be adjusted in such a way that teachers coming from colleges have skills on how to handle learners with special needs if inclusion is to be successful.

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CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.1 BACKGROUND OF THE STUDY

The education of handicapped persons has been supported by many International Conferences, which include the universal declaration of Human Rights (1948), which stated that everyone has the right to education, which shall be free and compulsory regardless of race, colour, sex, birth or any status. Other International Conferences included the Jorntien Declaration on education for all (EFA) (1990), the Salamanca statement on inclusive education (1994) and Dakar Framework for Action (2000).

Special needs education in Kenya started in 1945 before independence. It was started to rehabilitate army officers who returned from the Second World War with injuries. The education was Salvation Army and the Lutheran church. The non-governmental organizations such as the Rotary club, the Kenya Red cross also played a big role towards people with special needs. They provided medical care, food and recreations in homes. It was out of the homes of war victims that the earliest special schools grew to cater for broad categories of learners of visual empowerment, physical handicapped, mental handicap and hearing empowered. The first special schools were constructed in 1945.

Since independence, the Kenyan government has established commissions to look into sustainability of educational provisions for all children. Several educational commissions were set up to look at issues on education for children with special needs. These commissions were the Kenya education (1964), which was called the Ominde Report, which advocated for integration of children with special needs in regular schools. The National committee on educational objectives and policies (1976) known as the Gachathi Report recommended learners with special needs in special schools. The third commission was the presidential working party on Education and Manpower Training (1988) well known as the Kamunge Report, which stressed on creating awareness of the needs of the people with disabilities (PWD). The total integrated Quality Education and Training (1999) referred to as Koech Report stressed on the content of education at various levels.

According to children's Act (2001) learners with epilepsy have been valued, treated fairly and their voices heard in everything they do. Learners with epilepsy are capable of learning just like any other learners in school if given chance and guided. Education for All (EFA) (2001) is emphasized due to Free Primary Education (FPE).

Presently, the Kenyan Government Ministry of Education (2000) is in position to enable people with special needs to be at school like any other learner. In REF: 14/42/1/21, the Government sent two thousand shillings to every child with special needs at school and in 2007, REF: TSO/ED/VOL II/221, four thousands shillings was sent to schools to cater for learning resources and Medication for children with special needs.

Many International and National Conferences have supported the education of handicapped people which included the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (1948) which started that everyone has the right to education which should be free and

1.2 STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

The koech commission of 1999 recommended that all learners access education regardless of their disability. With the introduction of free primary education the government expects all learners to join regular schools without any form of discrimination. As a result of this, the researcher attempted to investigate the learning conditions of pupils with mental disabilities in regular primary schools in Amukura zone. Amukura Division of Teso District in Kenya

1.3 PURPOSE OF THE STUDY

The purpose of the study is to investigate learning conditions of learners with mental challenges in regular primary schools in Amukura Zone, Amukura Division of Teso District – Kenya. The research will look at the support services that teachers had set up in order to establish quality academic performance of these learners.

1.4 OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

The objective of this study among others is to

- Investigate the state of curriculum on pupils with mental disability
- Determine the effects of teaching/learning resources on the inclusion of learners with mental impairments in the main stream
- Establish the teachers attitude towards inclusion of learners with mental impairments in the general Education system
- Examine the influence of peer attitude on inclusion of learners with mental impairments.

1.5 RESEARCH QUESTIONS

- What is the state of curriculum contents on inclusion of learners with mental impairments in public primary schools in Amukura zone.
- How do teaching/learning resources affect the inclusion of learners with mental impairments in mainstream schools?

- What is the teachers attitude towards inclusion of learners mental impairment in general Education setting?
- What are the effects of peer attitude on the inclusion of learners' with mental impairments in public primary schools?

1.6 SCOPE OF THE STUDY

This study will cover 22 primary schools in Amukura zone, in Amukura Division of Teso District – Kenya.

1.7 SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

This study is important in that it establishes challenges facing the mentally retarded learners in Amukura Zone, Amukura District, Teso district-Kenya and to get the stakeholders sensitized so as to eradicate the barriers and help the mentally challenged to compete favorably alongside their peers academically and all other areas of life. The study will be of importance to the following stake holders, pupils, teachers, parents, community and the government.

CHAPTER TWO
REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

2.1 GENERAL OVERVIEW OF THE EDUCATION OF THE MENTALLY CHALLENGED LEARNERS.

Education is very essential to all human beings regardless of their individual needs or differences worldwide. Everyone has a right to education. It should be free to all. The human right declaration pointed out that children should access education including children with special needs. The declaration emphasized inclusive education thus allowing children to learn in regular schools, ("Human rights declaration of 1948 module 18).

In most conferences inclusion was advocated whereby all learners despite their differences can learn, contribute to the learning and also be given opportunities as they learn.

The mentally challenged learners need encouragement and also need people who have the heart to help them without seeing them as a burden. Inclusion of the mentally challenged learners in schools has had different impacts on learners and teachers and this has made

learning for the, mentally challenged learners very difficult because the teachers do not cater for those learners. They see them as burdens and time wasters. Therefore the teachers work without minding them, teachers are after the men score and work with only those “Norman” and ready to learn learners.

The mentally challenged learner are taught or examined like the regular learners. Because of these challenges they are meant to repeat one class which will be feel unwanted both in the school and in the community forcing them drop out of the school system completely.

Institutions were started by the 9th century but the government insisted on inclusion could get learners who are mentally challenged could get education in most favourable environment a round his/her home area. Randiki (2002) noted that inclusion has improved the interaction between the learners, peers, parents and community.

2.2 CLASSIFICATION OF LEARNERS

According to Ndurumo M.M (1993)

Learners with mentally impairments are classified into four major categories namely

- Children with mild developmental disability. They are referred to as educable mentally retarded
- Children with moderate development disability. Referred to as “trainable mentally retarded”
- Children with severe developmental disability.
- Children with profound developmental disability.

2.3 LEARNING ABILITIES.

Learners under different categories have different perception of learning. Therefore, different material and content have to be put in place to suit individual needs.

Every school should try as much as possible to assist every individual to achieve full potential by providing differentiated curriculum.

2.4 CURRICULUM CONTENT

The curriculum in most schools do not cater for individual differences. The mentally challenged learners mostly need a lot of time and teachers want to complete the syllabus within a given period of time. This makes it difficult for the learners to cope.

Due to the rigid curriculum that is used it has made the mentally challenged learners drop out of schools due to their frequent bad performance.

Most teachers fear the inspector because they normally want to get teachers when the schemes tally with the time or weeks. They don't care whether in that school there are learners with special needs. Therefore teachers can't not adjust due to strict inspector who threaten the teachers' jobs.

2.5 TEACHERS' ATTITUDE

Teachers take learners with mental retardation as a curse and can not do any thing at all. They take them as people who must depend on others for support and this makes them think that they are burden to the entire community. Most teachers also think that these

learners are mentally challenged they can not do anything else but sit and idle a round.

When mentally challenged learners are admitted in schools, their names are rarely included in the register maybe because they can not easily respond to their names adequately. When the class is in session, some teachers neglect moving near these learners or even having a look at what they have written. This makes most learners loose interest and in the long run became aggressive and later drop out of school.

Most teachers will even sit and discuss about then suggesting that the learners may be sent to special schools since they are a burden to them. Other say they should be left at home instead of wasting time. Some teachers don't want to be close to these learners because they can they feel that some sickness could be contiguous through touch or interaction.

As exams are administered, they are not normally given papers to even try. Teachers feel that they are not capable of writing anything. This discourages them and hence they drop out of school. Therefore most teachers think that inclusion of learner with mental challenges in regular schools is nothing but a waste of time Randiki (2002) states that communities had negative attitude towards persons with disabilities. This is now seen among teachers who have negative attitudes towards mentally challenged learners. Teachers take these learners as non-performance and that they will always lower the mean-score therefore dislike them. The best the teachers can do is to label these learners and call them names that cause a lot of stigmatization to the learners.

2.6 PEER ATTITUDE

These young people are part of the community. They look upon those who are disabled as cursed. This makes them not to mix freely with their peers who are mentally retarded. This type of attitude hinders peer tutoring among the children.

2.7 TEACHING LEARNING RESOURCES.

For learning to be more realistic and practical the use of relevant teaching/learning resources must be put in place. Teaching /learning resources enhance learning by the use of almost all senses. This is very important because it helps learners to grasp the knowledge better by use of the residential senses in operation. To this effect, the mentally challenged learners need the relevant resources to make learning more investing to enhance real learning. The resources also assist in linking the acquired knowledge to real life situations.

2.8 TEACHING METHODS /STRATEGIES

To provide education to the mentally challenged learners, believes and all social expectations should be removed, Randiki (2002) therefore the teachers should understand these learners, accept them and help them to attain knowledge normally without being thought as enable children.

Most classrooms are still using traditional methods for teaching learners. This usually involves lecturing to the children while they sit and try to stay focused on the information being relayed on them. Teachers should realize the importance of utilizing the Childs

sense particularly touch and movement. The brain may respond to tactical and kinetic memories.

Some teachers express reluctance to change their ways of teaching but they should realize that just a few changes in the classroom can be so beneficial to those learners (Jean Harold, 2003) stated that teachers should realize that if varied methods are used and learners are motivated, then their brains will want to learn and participate in classrooms activities in order to gain knowledge.

CHPATER THREE

METHODOLOGY

3.1. RESEARCH DESIGN

According to Nworgu cited in Owoeye (2000) described research design as the structural and technical steps that are essential in the investigation, collection and processing of data to provide answers to research questions

The researcher used the survey research design in conducting her study. This design was convenient for collecting data from large population so as to determine the current status of the problem and also justify the current situation or condition of her study. This is highlighted by Opondo (2007). It helped her obtain data from many respondents in a wide area

3.2. TARGETED POPULATION

The target population was drawn from twenty-two primary schools giving a total of 180 teachers in Amukura zone.

3.3. SAMPLE SIZE

Due to time factor, the researcher sampled 69 teachers from the 180 teachers in 7 schools out of the 22 primary schools in the zone.

3.4. RESEARCH INSTRUMENTS

The research developed and used questionnaire for the purpose of collecting data. The questionnaires had nine main questions. Some of the questions were closed ended that is question with "YES" or "NO" boxes were provided for one to tick the appropriate answer or fill in the blank spaces. Some questions were open ended where the respondents were expected to explain their ideas. Some questions were Matrix type (containing all the two parts)

3.5. VALIDITY AND RELIABILITY OF RESEARCH INSTRUMENTS

The researcher carried out the study in 22 out of 24 schools and surrounding communities in the study area. The reflected 80% of the target population. The main respondents were teachers in regular schools who routinely interact with learner's with mental disability. The researcher also chose on who share classroom and other learning facilities with learners with mental disability. Parents in the surrounding communities were also given questionnaires. Fortunately, all the respondents returned the questionnaire.

This sample gave a fair overview of varying opinions on their understanding of mental retardation and the corresponding attitude that affect learning conditions of learners with mental disability. The respondents were selected through cluster sampling of teachers, pupils and parents after which respondents from each cluster were randomly selected. This was meant to control extraneous variable. The selection of regular primary schools with similar historical backgrounds, school staffing level and learners from similar socio-economic background and family educational backgrounds were to ensure that all factors remained constant.

3.6. DATA COLLECTION

The researcher got an authority letter from Kampala International University.

She used it to visit the district education officer to seek permission to do the research.

The D.E.O endorsed the authorized letter from Kampala International University, allowing the researcher to do her research in the district .During her visit, the researcher presented to the Head teacher the authority letter from Kampala International University endorsed by the DEO allowing her to visit the schools. Most of the head teachers were co-operative. After some discussion even the hesitant head teachers allowed the researcher to use their schools for the study. She talked to the prospective respondents about the intended research schedule. With the plotting schools, the questionnaires had been well filled. During the second visit the researcher distributed the questionnaires .She requested the respondents to fill in the questionnaires. Most of them were very kind and filled them in the same day. In the some two schools two weeks duration was allowed for them to fill in the questionnaires. She had to make a third visit to collect the questionnaires check if they were well filled and put them safely in a file for security and confidentially 100% of questionnaires received back. The collected data was coded ready for analysis.

CHAPTER FOUR

DATA PRESENTATION, ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

INTRODUCTION

This chapter analyzed and represent the collected data. The data was analyzed tabulated and represented in different types of tables and graphs. First the data was tallied given in frequency and percentage.

There are twenty-two schools in Amukura Zone seven schools were picked on for the research. One school was used for piloting; six schools were used for the real research results. Two schools were picked from Kaliwa base, two from Apokor base and three Kotur base one of the purpose of piloting.

The following table represents school selected for research number of pupils versus number of teachers.

Table 1. Name of schools, enrolments and teachers establishment

SCHOOLS	NUMBER OF TEACHERS	NUMBER OF PUPILS	NO. OF TEACHERS SAMPLED
Amukura Girls	9	350	3
Kochiek Primary	11	980	4
Kodedema Primary	10	830	3
Apokor Primary	10	857	4
Kaliwa Primary	12	1056	4
Apatit Primary	8	530	3
Okwata Primary	7	380	3
Total			24

Kochek Primary was used for piloting.

The data analyzed and tabulated is from the other six schools.

Questions 1,2 and 3 in the questionnaire sought to gather information on curriculum content its suitability and effects on inclusion of learners with mental impairments.

TABLE 2 Challenges in implementation of curriculum content

CATEGORY	FREQUENCY	PERCENTAGE
YES	18	100%
NO	0	0%
TOTAL	Σf 18	100%

The above questions sought to know whether there are challenges facing implementation the curriculum content to learners with mental impairments in an inclusive setting. All the 18 respondents said YES as indicated by the results of 100%.

TABLE 3 Kinds of challenges

CATEGORY	FREQUENCY	PERCENTAGE
Lack of resources	2	11.1%
Wide curriculum	4	22.2%
Untrained personnel	6	33.3%
Negative attitude	4	22.2%
Low IQ	2	11.15
TOTAL	Σf 18	99.9%

Although the respondents admit there are challenges in implementing the curriculum contents to the learners with mental impairments in an inclusive setting. It did not come out clearly what the main problem was. They had mixed feelings. Although lack of ⁺trained SNE teachers took the preference of 33% while wide curriculum too 22%.

TABLE 4 Success of inclusive of learners with mental impairments in regular schools

CATEGORY	FREQUENCY	PERCENTAGE
YES	2	11%
NO	16	89%
TOTAL	Σf 18	100%

More respondents felt that inclusion of learners with mental impairments in an inclusive setting was not successful 89% as compared to 11% who said it's successful.

TABLE 5 Reasons for success or failure

CATEGORY	FREQUENCY	PERCENTAGE
Negative attitude	2	11%
Untrained personnel	3	17%
Teacher pupil ratio	2	11%
Positive attitude	2	11%
Poor performance	9	50%
TOTAL	Σf 18	100%

It was evident that learners with mental impairments inclusive is not successful due to their poor performance 50% as compared to other reasons. May be other learners make fun of them because they are low achievers. Teachers discourage them by their comments or they are made to repeat until they give up. Teachers are not ready to be blamed for being non-performance. So, they technically get ride of these learners.

TABLE 6 Suitability of the curriculum content

CATEGORY	FREQUENCY	PERCENTAGE
TRUE	6	33%
FALSE	12	67%
TOTAL	Σf 18	100%

67% of the respondents said the curriculum content is not suitable for learners with mental impairment as compared to 33% who said it is suitable.

TABLE 7 Impacts of teaching /learning resources

CATEGORY	FREQUENCY	PERCENTAGE
YES	14	78%
NO	4	22%
TOTAL	Σf 18	100%

78% of the respondents said the teaching resources have a positive impact on learners with mental impairment as compared of 22% of the respondents who said their was no impact.

TABLE 8 Sources of teaching/learning materials

CATEGORY	FREQUENCY	PERCENTAGE
LOCAL ENVIRONMENT	10	56%
BOUGHT	8	44%
TOTAL	Σf 18	100/%

Its evident from the table above that 56% of the teachers use locally available teaching and learning resources although a good number 44% buy them.

TABLE 9 Teacher's attitude

CATEGORY	FREQUENCY	PERCENTAGE
STRONGLY	0	0%
AGREE	2	11%
DISAGREE	9	50%
STRONGLY DISAGREED	7	39%
TOTAL	Σf 18	100/%

The respondents disagreed with the fact 50% of that teachers enjoy teaching learners with mental impairments in an inclusive setting with 39% strongly disagreed with this fact only 11% agree with the statement. This reflected a negative attitude on the side of teachers.

TABLE 10 Reasons for negative /positive attitudes

CATEGORY	FREQUENCY	PERCENTAGE
NOT SNE TRAINED	4	22%
WIDE/COMPLEX CURRICULUM	1	6%
LACK OF MATERIALS	1	6%
LOW PERFORMANCE	8	44%
AGGRESSIVVE	2	11%
RAISES SELF ESTEEM	2	11%
TOTAL	Σf 18	100/%

The respondents 44% said they are poor performers and can try vocational training or special schools and units. Lack of skills on how to deal with learners with mental impairments was an issue as it took 22% as compared to their characters being aggressive 11%. Lack of materials wide and complex curriculum took 6% each. Although with low percentage 11% it is worth noting that some respondents said that inclusion helps to raise their self esteem by feeling accepted and loved. Separation demoralizes them. The researcher believes with more sensitization this percentage will raise.

TABLE 11 Availability of special needs education teachers

CATEGORY	FREQUENCY	PERCENTAGE
YES	12	67%
NO	6	33%
TOTAL	Σf 18	100/%

Out of the 6 schools where the research was carried out of 4 schools had at least 1 teacher trained in special needs education. It is reflected by the above table where 67% of the respondents said YES compared to 33% who said NO.

TABLE 12 . Effects of the peer attitudes (Cordial interaction)

CATEGORY	FREQUENCY	PERCENTAGE
YES	3	17%
NO	15	83%
TOTAL	Σf 18	100/%

The research findings revealed that there is no good interaction between regular learners and learners with mental impairments. This is reflected by 83% of the respondents who said FALSE as compared to 17% of the respondents who said TRUE.

TABLE 13 Reasons for poor interactions

CATEGORY	FREQUENCY	PERCENTAGE
Aggressive	5	33.3%
Low of communication	2	13.3%
Low self esteem	2	13.3%
Fear/Despise	6	40%
TOTAL	Σf 15	99.9/%

This table of frequency and percentages are calculated out of the 15 respondents who said there is no good interaction between the regular learners and learners with mental

impairments in an inclusive setting. Fear of regular learners, looking down on learners with mental impairments took 40%. Learners with mental impairments being aggressive and so threatening or scaring, the regular learners too 33.3%, lack of communication skills and low esteem on the side of learners with mental impairments took 13.3% each.

TABLE 14 Effects of peer interactions

CATEGORY	FREQUENCY	PERCENTAGE
Fight quarrels	5	28%
Low self esteem	1	5%
Drop out of school	10	56%
Encourage them	2	11%
TOTAL	Σf 18	100%

The researcher results revealed that poor interaction of peer had negative effects on learners with mental impairments. Some felt rejected unwanted and they withdraw 5%. Others reacted violently to that rejection and become aggressive using their physique to intimidate others and look for recognition 28% of the respondents said that a big group give up and drop out of school 56% of the respondents revealed that there was yet another group though small 11% that said the learners interact well.

The regular learners learn to appreciate and accept that in the society all people are not of the same. They take time to encourage these learners, play with them and support them with class activities.

CHAPTER FIVE

5.0 DISCUSSIONS, SUMMARY, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This chapter dealt with discussions of the research results, summary of the study, conclusion and recommendations.

5.1 DISCUSSIONS

The research findings revealed that there are challenges in implementing the regular curriculum to learners with mental impairments. It was 100% yes. These challenges are: lack of trained special needs education teachers, who could competently interpret and adopt the curriculum according to the needs of the learners. The curriculum was too wide for learners with mental impairments to comprehend. Mwaura and Wanyera (2002) observed that only mild and moderate categories of these learners can benefit from inclusion in regular schools if the curriculum content is adopted rightly.

Those with severe and profound developmental disabilities may not benefit from the regular curriculum content but can be trained in activities of daily living. These researcher agrees with the research findings and observations of Mwaura and Wanyera (2000) that the learner with mental impairments should be correctly placed and given what they require by means of curriculum adaptation. She suggested practical lessons should be emphasized because they give pre-vocational skills. For example during creative arts lessons they can be taught how to weave, draw, paint and other related subject items. Elements of Agriculture can be taught during science lessons for example rearing Chickens, Sheep, Cows or Goats. These skills would be more helpful for them ion life

than academics where there is very little achievement. Negative attitude by teachers, lack of resources and low intelligence quotient were part of the challenges that came up.

The research findings brought it out strongly that inclusion of learners with mental impairments in the mainstream was not successful. 89% of the researchers said so. Reasons for the failure were poorly academically performance, 50% untrained personnel, 17% negative attitude and low teacher pupil ratio each took 11%. It came out strongly that the poor performance of these learners discouraged them and ended up dropping out of school. The 17% who said there was lack of personnel, the teachers not have the skills of handling these learners this perpetrates their poor performance. The competition among schools (mean scores) made these learners to be sidelined or to repeat with the intention of discouraging them so that they could drop out of school. This was seen especially by the ratio of pupils in standard seven as compared to those in standard eight.

All these came about because teachers did not want to be blamed for the poor performance of the learners which may be reflected in the national examination. The researcher differs with the research findings that poor performance of learners with mental impairments is the main course of failure of inclusion of these learners in the mainstream. She suggests that negative attitude of teachers on these learners, low expectation of teachers from these learners, untrained personnel and high pupils teacher ratio leads to poor performance. Many teachers feared to be associated with his low performance as it could make one to be locked out of a school by the community (parents). It is the same reason that made head teachers be hesitant to register these

learners for National Examination like K.C.P.E. The pressure from the Education Offices who wanted standards and did not consider learners with special needs was another draw back for teachers. The space at which these learners internalized concepts drew teachers back in syllabus coverage. All in all teachers like other members of the community consider any form of handicap as a curse. They consider learners with mental impairment as unteachable, good for nothing who are destined for fail. The Kenya system of education is academic oriented. Many teachers will not be comfortable with these slow learners who lower the school mean score. Some feel that their presence in school is a disgrace. They should be particular schools known for poor performance or in special schools. Otiato (1996) observes that even learners with minor disabilities receive their education in special schools. She noted that this has contributed to prejudice amongst non-disabled people and perpetrated discrimination.

The research findings brought it out strongly that teachers' attitude was negative. Only 11% of the respondents said they enjoy teaching learners with mental impairments in an inclusive setting. This percentage is too small compared to 89% who had a negative attitude. The findings brought it out clearly that teachers feared these learners because they are aggressive, they lack teaching/learning resources, they do not know how to break down the curriculum content because it is either too wide or too complex and they have not been trained in special needs education in order to gain skills on how to support these

The negative attitude of teachers discourages learners with mental impairments. Some of them withdrew, just sit in class and never participate. Others turn out to be hostile and bullies to attract the teachers attention. Some teachers were scared by learners with mental impairment to the extent that they ^{have} nothing to do with them. They do not even correct them when they do wrong in case this condition affects their families. Mwamba and Kalabula (2000) have also established that the teachers may have low expectations from learners with special needs in education and may not give him /her challenging work. This may make the learner to give up trying as his /her efforts are not appreciate.

Randiki (2002) also observed that some communitie had negative attitude towards persons with disabilities. The researcher agrees with Randiki because this is still seen in teachers who have negative attitude towards learners with mental impairments. Never the less the researcher was impressed by the 11% indication of a positive attitude from teachers about inclusion. This indicates that with more sensitization and training of teachers special s needs education, the attitude will slowly change.

Teachers need to understand that there is no community of genius only. Individuals are different and they learn differently and at different paces. They need to be tolerant, accommodative and make extra efforts to assist learners with mental impairments in an inclusive setting.

Randiki (2002) states that communities had negative attitude towards persons with disabilities. The research results agree with Randiki's statement. 83 % of the espondents

said there is no cordial interaction between regular learners and learners with mental impairments. The research results are a reflection of the communities' attitude as the young people listen and observe how those with special needs are treated by the community. They look at the disabled as less human beings who are cursed. The peers are not free with learners with mental impairments. They call them 'mad' in low tones. Some of them did not like interacting with them in and outside class. This make them isolated. To counteract the loneliness some will withdraw but others become hostile to call for attention. Learning is a collaborative. Peers influence each other a lot during discussion on group activities. Peers tutoring also improves performance of weak learners.

Negligence by peers make learners with negative impairment feel out of place and to not like being at school. Continuous absenteeism makes their weak performance worse.

Hostility against learners with mental impairment feel out of place and to not like being at school. Continuous absenteeism makes their weak performance worse.

Hostility against learners with mental impairment where by the peers to not want to share anything with them makes them more hostile. If they are big bodied they use their physique to silence the others. Love is usually reciprocated. Where it lacks, then hatred and animosity prevails. According to Otiato (1996) learners without special needs feel un cooperative to take part in group activities in learning situations. She notes that they tend to believe that their continued interaction may make them disabled. Biggie (1982) observes that a good number of the peers fell that people with disabilities need to learn in separate settings because they are considered inferior. Although the research results

reflect negative effects of the negative interaction of regular learners with learners with mental impairments, there is hope of change with more sensitization to the school community and bearing in mind new ideas take root. It is sad to note that part of the negative effects 56% of it is dropping out of school. It leaves a big question; Will the government achieve the objective of full inclusion by the year 2015? Serious ground work needs to be done in creating awareness of inclusion of learners with mental impairments by sensitizing the entire community to realize that all people can co-exist despite their diversities. It is nothing worth that 11% said there is positive interaction and it helps to encourage and impact positive self esteem on the part of those with mental impairments. This exposure of regular learners to learners with mental impairments help them to appreciate and accept them as members of the society. They learn to appreciate the diversity in human beings. They express their appreciation by encouraging them , playing with them and supporting them in and outside class. Both print and electronic media need to give positive information of people who are mentally impaired. Their achievements should be more emphasized than their weaknesses.

The research findings also brought it out strongly that teaching/ learning resources have a positive impact on learners with mental impairments. The findings agree with Otiato (2002) who observed that cognition takes place when the brain interprets and integrates sensory inputs. They allow one to use a variety of senses to get information. Maria Montessori an Italian Educator and Physician who lived between (1870-1952) believed in mental stimulation by meaningful activities, whereby children were allowed to play with materials of their interest within strictly disciplined limits. This developed initiative, self

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reliance and self-esteem. Jean Herold (2003) observed that teachers should realize that if varied methods are used and learners motivated then the brain will want to learn and participate in classroom activities in order to gain knowledge. Most schools have learning resources both brought and improvised.

The free primary Education Programmes have enabled 56% of the respondents bring up the idea of bought teaching /learning resources. A part from the regular disbursement for individual learners, schools with learners with special needs in education occasionally get an extra amount to support in purchase of necessary teaching /learning resources and other requirements for learners with special in education.

As much as the teaching /learning resources were available, the situation in schools revealed that the resources were hardly used. The high pupil teacher ration did not allow room for personal teacher pupil interaction. It made many teachers to prefer lecture method to other methods. This disadvantaged learners with mental impairments because they take long to form and internalize concepts. They end up being spectators in class. They loose interest in school work. Their weak performance becomes worse and end up dropping out of school. In schools where teaching/learning resources were used effectively, learners with mental impairments academic performance improves. The researcher highly supports the idea of effective use of teaching /learning resources.

5.2 SUMMARY

The researcher had heard dehumanizing titles names like morons, idiots, untouchable academic dwarf given to slow learners in schools. She wondered how learners with mental impairments were taken care of in public primary schools. She felt a great need to investigate on challenges facing inclusive of learners with mental impairments in public primary schools. She investigated on effects of curriculum content, teaching/ learning resources, teachers attitude and influence on peer attitude all in relating to inclusion of learners with mental impairments. She found out that researchers both educational psychologists had researched on how to identify children with developmental disabilities by using different assessments tests, they had classified them according to their mental abilities for example mild, moderated, severe and profound. Research like Mwaura and Wanyera (2002) had already observed that only mild and moderate categories of learners with mental impairment can get some education and so benefit in inclusive setting. Others like category three the severe can only be trained in activities of daily living while the profound may need care throughout their lives. Other educationist like Maria Montessori, Jean and Otiato among others observed that the interaction of the learner, peer teacher has to be that of appreciation and support by way of human or other resources if these learners are to benefit.

The research reveals that it is ignorance that is hindrance to inclusion in some areas of the world as observed by Cannitigen (1981) Amukura zone being one of those areas because the teachers and learners seemed to see the impairments first and amplify it at the expense of the learners. There is need to create awareness on education office, the EARC

and the teachers trained in special needs education should join hands in sensitizing the community on inclusive education. There is need to provide necessary materials and resources so that the learners may be comfortable and be able to learn. That's why the government sends extra money to purchase materials in regular public primary school where they learn so that they can be taken care out in their own communities (near home)

The research results came up with curriculum content as a real challenge. It is not suitable for learners with mental impairment. The mode of presentation and evaluation remains a challenge as expressed Benzen (1989) who observed that teachers work is to motivate and organize. The big pupil teacher ratio does not give room for that. Teachers lack of skills on how to handle such learners was another draw back. Koech (2000) cited that overcrowded 8-4-4 system of the education officers on syllabus coverage has made the teachers to go on with the average and above average learners leaving behind slow learning where learners with mental impairment.

Learners with mental impairments are discouraged by the teacher's attitude, complex curriculum, teaching methods, negligence by the school community, being made fun of by their peers because of their weak performance and have ended up dropping out of school. They have not gained much from inclusive education. All in all a small percentage has benefited especially in social interaction and where they were given prevocational skills. They have become self-reliant and can operate small business or agricultural projects.

5.3 CONCLUSION

The purpose of this study was to investigate challenges facing inclusion of learners with mental impairments in regular public primary schools in Amukura zone, Teso district. It was found out that the curriculum used for learners with mental impairments in an inclusive setting is not suitable for them and discouraged them.

The teaching /learning resources had a positive impact on learners with mental impairments. They enhanced learning as a variety of sense was used. Teachers had a negative attitude towards the inclusion of learners with mental impairments. This was because of cultural belief where disability was associated with curses. There was also an element of lack of skills as many of the teachers were not trained in special needs education and so did not know how to handle the learners. Most teachers felt their efforts wasted as the learners took too long to internalize concepts. Hardly did they achieve their objectives and the mean score syndrome they felt let down. Commonly the peers had negative influence on learners with mental impairments because their poor interaction. They found it difficult to accommodate the antisocial behavior of these learners. The weak performance of these learners made regular learners to look down on them. There was a sign of hope that the attitude of both teachers and learners would change with time and more sensitization as revealed by the research findings.

5.4 RECOMMENDATIONS

Knowledge is power. Lack of knowledge and skills on how to handle learners with mental impairments in regular public primary schools had greatly affected functional inclusion of these learners.

The research findings revealed that functional inclusion policy is mainly on paper and not a reality on the ground. Mostly, these learners were registered in regular schools but hardly received any support. They were used to attract funding of schools but hardly benefited and individuals.

The researcher therefore recommends that:-

1. There should be a serious sensitizations programme on the school community and stake holders.
2. Curriculum developer should come up with a suitable curriculum learners with mental impairments in an inclusive setting.
3. Teacher training colleges' curriculum and programmes should have elements of special needs education so that graduates go to the field ready for inclusive education.
4. Officers in charge of special education at the District level should support teachers in regular schools by way of policy interaction and implementation of learners with special needs and monitor their retention rates in schools.

5. Inspectors of schools should be conducted on what is expected from teachers regarding learners with special needs in education.
6. Inspection /schools assessment on support given to learners with special needs should be enhanced.
7. Practical and oral examinations should be emphasized instead of being only academic oriented.
8. The thirty minutes allowance during National Examination should be revised to about an hour.
9. Severe and profound categories of learners with mental impairments should be put in special schools for proper care and training.
10. Teachers should prepare and adequately use relevant teaching /learning resources and vary their teaching methods and approaches. An individualized educational programme should be used where necessary.
11. Workshops and seminars should be organized for teachers who are already in the field and are not trained in special needs education.
12. The government should construct and equip resources rooms in every school so that extra support can be offered to learners with special needs on their own.
13. The government should employ more teachers to ease the high pupil teacher ratio.
14. There should be programmes on print and electronic media advocating special needs education and particularly inclusive education.

If the above recommendations are put in place, the attitude towards learners with mental impairments would change, the academic performance would improve and they would be helped to successfully go through the education system according to their ability.

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The C.O Mosby Company.

Dear Respoendent,

This questionnaire is meant to collect on challenges facing inclusion of learners with mental impairments in Amukura zone, Teso District. I request you to assist me with my study on this topic. Please be as frank and elaborate as possible.

Your contribution will be treated with maximum confidentiality and used only for the purpose of the study.

Thank you very much for your co-operation.

QUESTIONNAIRES

1. (i) Are there challenges in implementing the curriculum content to the learners with mental impairments?

Yes

No

(ii) If yes what are they?

2. Do you think inclusion of learners with mental impairments in regular school is successful?

Yes

No

(ii) Give reasons for your answer?

3. The curriculum content used in inclusive setting suits learners with mental impairment

True

False

4. Teachers enjoy teaching learners with mental impairment in all inclusive setting

Strongly Agree Agree Disagree Strongly disagree

5. Are there special needs education teachers to handle learners with mental impairment in your school?

Yes

No

6. Teaching/ Learning resources have a positive impact on learners with mental impairment

Yes

No

7. What is your source of your teaching/learning materials

Local environment

Buying

8. (i) Regular learners interact well with learners with mental impairment

True

False

(ii) if false, give reasons

9. What are the effects of interaction of learners in number 8 above

BUDGET

Item	Quantity	Unit cost Kshs	Total cost Kshs
Foolscap	2 reams	250	500.00
Pens	7	10	70.00
Internet services			1500.00
Typing /printing services	60 pages	40	2400.00
Spiral / binding	1	100	100.00
Transport			2000.00
Substance			1000.00
Telephone services			500.00
Contingences			807.00
Total			8070.00



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Office of the Director

24th April 2008

TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN:

Dear Sir/Madam,

RE: INTRODUCTION LETTER FOR MS/MRS/MR.....

REG. #.....

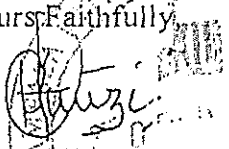
The above named is our student in the Institute of Open and Distance Learning (IODL), pursuing a Diploma/Bachelors degree in Education.

He/she wishes to carry out a research in your Organization on:

The research is a requirement for the Award of a Diploma/Bachelors degree in Education.

Any assistance accorded to him/her regarding research will be highly appreciated.

Yours Faithfully,


MUHWEZI JOSEPH
HEAD, IN-SERVICE
DIRECTOR

(Circular stamp: KAMPALA INTERNATIONAL UNIVERSITY, INSTITUTE OF OPEN AND DISTANCE LEARNING, DISTANCE STUDIES)