

KAMPALA INTERNATIONAL UNIVERSITY

**TEACHERS' ATTITUDE TOWARDS ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE
OF LEARNERS WITH LEARNING DIFFICULTIES
IN KIBWEZI DIVISION KIBWEZI
DISTRICT KENYA**

BY

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**A RESEARCH STUDY SUBMITTED IN PARTIAL FULFILMENT OF
THE REQUIREMENT FOR THE AWARD OF DEGREE OF BACHELOR
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DECLARATION

I FRANCIS MUINDE SANDU Reg. No. BED/ 15290/62/ DF hereby declare that this special study paper is any own original work and not a duplication of similarly published work of any scholar for academic purpose as partial requirement of any college or otherwise. It has therefore never been submitted to any other institution of higher learning for the award of a certificate, Diploma, or Degree in Special Needs Education.

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DEDICATION

This research is dedicated to my dear wife Agnes Ngina and my brother Mr. Benard Sandu for the moral support given unto me in undertaking and accomplishing this research successfully in the scheduled period of time.

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ABSTRACT

It is apparently true that learners with learning difficulties range for mild to profound levels. The later is highly noticeable because of the extreme poor performance in exams, however, majority of the learners with learning difficulties drop out from school as a result of pressure from their peer groups aggressive parents and more so adamant teachers who humiliate and force them to repeat same class year after the other.

Since this has been the trend in most of the primary schools in Kibwezi Division Kibwezi District, the teachers will read the research and realize the academic havoc they cause to the learners with learning difficulties and at the same time cultivate a positive response when handling them.

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CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.1 BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Education is a fundamental requirement for every person in the so called global village. It is considered as a human right. Every child should be given the opportunity to acquire skills, knowledge and values that are acceptable in all levels of learning. Every child has unique characteristics, interests, ability and learning needs. Education should therefore be designed and implement to cater for broad diversified characteristics and needs of every individual.

In the field of conclusive setting some learners may fail to meet teacher's expectations. Such learners have learning difficulties that are often misunderstood by teachers when compared to most able peers. Teachers sometimes describe them as lazy sluggish, inconsistent and rude while in actual sense may be experiencing a problem. It is therefore important this research topic will enable teachers to correct themselves and meet needs of such learners with learning difficulties.

1.2 STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

Teachers' attitude towards academic performance of learners with learning difficulties has devastated their effort to improve and excel in education.

1.3 PURPOSE OF THE STUDY

The purpose of the study was to examine how teachers attitude towards performance of learners with learning difficulties contribute to performance in academic standards.

However, learners with learning difficulties are mistreated by their teachers, parents and peers who fail to comprehend them. Some times are beaten, ignored

and reprimanded by their teachers. On the other hand, peers who heckle and call them all sorts of abusive names.

At home they have no peace to because of angry parents whom their expectations are not met. They long to see their children becoming engineers, pilots, lawyers, journalists, doctors and accountants among others. Their dreams could be achieved if at all such learners are given moral support and their problem intervention.

1.4 GENERAL OBJECTIVE OF THE STUDY

The researcher has examined how teachers attitude towards academic performance of learners with learning difficulties contribute to academic performance in Kibwezi Division.

1.4.1 SPECIFIC OBJECTIVES

- (i). To find out teachers understanding of learning difficulties
- (ii). To find out how teachers assess learners with learning difficulties
- (iii) To investigate teachers view about learners with learning difficulties
- (iv) To determine learners performance in relation to learning atmosphere and appropriate approaches by the teachers.

1.4.2 RESEARCH QUESTIONS

The study has sought to the following questions;

- i. Do teachers have knowledge and understanding of learning difficulties?
- ii. What are the indicators of assessing learners with learning difficulties?
- iii. How can teachers help learners with learning difficulties?
- iv. What are the causes of learners' poor performance?

1.5 SCOPE OF THE STUDY

The target population of the research comprises all the regular Primary School teachers in Kibwezi Division Kibwezi District.

Out of 65 primary schools, 36 teachers participated in providing information on how attitudes of teachers have influenced the performance of learners with learning difficulties.

1.6 SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

The research will help teachers realize their mistakes and create heart of acceptance of learners with learning difficulties. It will also enable teachers apprehend the causes, indicators and techniques of handling learners with learning difficulties. Parents, teachers of the learners with learning difficult will develop positive view of their learners' performance and assimilate the same to the rest of the affected parents.

Enormous school drop out caused by related learning difficulties of pupils is going to be reduced thus improving ministry performance.

The learners with learning difficulties are going to benefit and pursue bright future.

1.7 DEFINITION OF THE TERMS

(a) LEARNING DIFFICULTIES

This is a situation in which a learner encounters or experience outstanding difficulty in learning than the majority of children of his/ her age.

(b) ATTITUDE

A person set of predisposition for responding in a particular way to a specified class of objects or people

(c) ASSESSMENT

It is an approach evaluating and individual strength and weakness by applying psychological, social and mental or educational tests.

(d) INCLUSIVE EDUCATION

It is a process of equipping learners with relevant education and thereby meeting individual needs wit in the main stream. It involves using all available resources to create learning opportunities to all learners.

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 AN OVERVIEW OF LEARNING DIFFICULTIES

Usually relatively normal children acquire skills, knowledge and moral values without the need of direction or instructions from an adult. On the other hand children with learning difficulties have contradicting experiences and therefore they need to be stimulated in order to acquire required skills.

Poor performance in most of the national examinations can be attributed to poor classroom management, negative attitude by learners, wrong approaches used by teachers and of improper learning resources.

2.2 EARLY INDICATORS OF LEARNING DIFFICULTIES.

Some studies indicate that the best learning sequences come from arranging institutions in learning hierarchies (J.L. Brown 1970; Phillip and Kane 1973). This calls for mastery of basic concepts before a learner progresses to other concepts, this is a common practice in schools where by learners are expected to learn basic concepts.

Hierarchy of Mathematics skills that are useful in planning basic intervention are provided by Evans and Mirner (1986) and Underhill et al (1980)

Many authorities (Cope land 1979 Reisman, 1982, Underhill et al (1980) claim that failure to understand basic concepts in beginning mathematics instructions contribute heavily to later learning problems, unfortunately learners with learning difficulties are often taught mathematics in a rote manner without ever achieving an understanding concept.

Authorities like Bleyand thorn fon 1981, Kaliski, 1967 note that many of the characteristics attributed to learning disabled students are related to mathematics difficulties. (Problems of perception memory language, reasoning, motor functioning and reading).

Other learners fail to perform well in Mathematics because of cognitive problems Turgensen and benl (1980) report that learning have difficulty in Mathematics because they fail to use cognitive strategies in computation or problem solving. They found that learning disabled youngsters do not readily use organized strategies that facilitate memorization recall.

Skinner (1987) Mower 1957, 1963 content that language is a learned phenomenon and its development can be accounted for by principle of learning recent comprehensive reviews of phonological development have been provided by Men yuk (1971, 1972) which deal with the three components of phonology. The segmental features the rules of combining these features and supra segmental r prosodic features. The segmental features refer to the distinctive differences between phonemes for example the differences “bet” and “pet”

A large number of psycholinguistics (Chomsky, 1965, 1966, Lennberg 1969, meneill 1966, 1968, folder and lleatz 1964) argue that language develops through a so called language acquisition device in short brow as ‘LAD’ which is psycho linguistically determined.

E.P Njuki and G. Oganda in their book learners with learning difficulties in inclusive setting (2002) reported experiencing problems in reading show the following signs. Hesitant and slow choppy, reading especially when the child is reading aloud. Failure to recognize familiar words. Missing out a line or reading

the same line twice or so or repeatedly losing his place while reading often associated with repetition

Confusion between similar looking words. Difficulty with breaking down a word into syllable, in throwing catching or kicking a ball.

The child has a problem of carrying out more than one instruction at a time. The child experiences difficulty in pronouncing multi-syllable words for example "hospital".

They may also have problem in finding the name of an object for example the name of a "cup". The learner often confuses the left for right and vice versa. The child may have very poor hand writing with many reversal and badly formulated letters. The child may experience in remembering what day it is and address. The learner has difficulty in remembering anything in sequential order for example days of the week, months of the year.

2.3 CAUSES OF LEARNING DIFFICULTIES

The causes of learning difficulties may take place before, during and afterbirth.

The causes of learning difficulties before birth or during pre-natal period are:

Rubella or Germany measles X-ray, and radiation, smoking, injustices, Air pollution inhaled by the expectant mother, Genetic factors and immunization, during pregnancy.

During birth, the causes may be as a result of: shortage of oxygen by the baby during birth, unusual delivery than it is expected and unfavorable birth conditions. I.e. lack of expert to attend the mother in labour. After birth learning difficulties may be caused by factors which include:

- (1) child abuse
- (2) head injuries
- (3) skull abnormalities
- (4) contract with some chemical agents and lack of stimulation and diseases

2.4 PREVENTION OF LEARNING DIFFICULTIES

As the saying goes prevention is better than cure most of the causative agents of learning difficulties can be prevented by eradicating the diseases that cause brain damage by early treatment. Expectant mother should attend antenatal clinics for monitoring and diagnosing of diseases that may affect the developing baby. Immunization schedule should be adhered for. The new born should be cared for strictly.

Couples experiencing genetic problems should be guided and counseled accordingly.

CHAPTER THREE

METHODOLOGY

3.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter aimed at investigating the attitude of regular primary teachers towards learners with learning difficulties. The study has focused on the following themes as highlighted on the research questionnaire.

- i. Knowledge and understanding of teachers about learners with learning difficulties.
- ii. Teachers' response towards learners with learning difficulties.

3.2 RESEARCH DESIGN

This study has adopted survey method to collect information through investigation approach and ensure improvement in future. The location of the study was Kibwezi division, Kibwezi District in Eastern province.

3.3 TARGET POPULATION AND SAMPLING TECHNIQUES

The target population of this study was regular Primary school teachers and learners with learning difficulties in Kibwezi Division.

Out of the 65 primary schools were picked for data collection the twelve schools were arrived at using simple random sampling. Two teachers from each school were selected randomly giving a total of 24 teachers and 12 head teachers. The cluster comprised of thirty six participants.

3.4. RESEARCH INSTRUMENT

The study used questionnaire as the main tool for data collection questionnaire helped to gather information from the teachers, head teachers and examination

departments. The researcher also used the instrument such as observation, interviewer and tests where necessary.

3.5 PROCEDURE OF THE STUDY

The researcher was guided by the research objectives to construct the research questionnaire. The research questionnaires were approved by fellow students and lecturers for the sake of validity and readability. The questionnaires were conveyed to respective participants by hand.

3.6 DATA COLLECTION

The researcher sought permission from the Head Teacher and teachers to collect data. The questionnaires were filled by individual who were sampled and hand them over to the researcher after one week. The researcher also interviewed and observed learners with learning difficulties and how oftenly were attended by the teachers. The researcher also interviewed the Head Teacher on learners with learning difficulties verses school drop out.

3.7 DATA ANALYSIS

Descriptive statistics such as tables, graphs and pie chart were used to analyze and represent information on data analysis.

CHAPTER FOUR
PRESENTATION AND DATA ANALYSIS

TABLE 4.1 WHERE TO FIND LEARNERS WITH LEARNING DIFFICULTIES

Responses	Frequency	Percentage
Schools	24	67%
Homes	10	27%
Hospitals	1	3%
Churches	1	3%
TOTAL	36	100%

Table 4.1 shows that majority of learners with learning difficulties are found in Primary Schools and a few cases at home while in hospitals and churches are extremely minimal. The interpretation is that schools are the main centres of learners with learning difficulties.

This indicates substantial number of parents have taken their children to school in Kibwezi Division.

TABLE 4.2: SPECIAL NEEDS CHILDREN IN PRIMARY SCHOOLS

Response	Frequency	Percentage
Yea	36	100
No	0	0
TOTAL	36	100

From the above table that analyzed the results of the questionnaire set to check special needs children in selected primary school, yes scored 100% while No scored 0%.

Interpretation – from the data above it can be seen that every school has special needs children in Kibwezi Division. This is because teachers have witnessed special needs pupils in their respective schools.

TABLE 4.3 A SPECIAL NEEDS TEACHER OR A REGULAR TEACHER

Response	Frequency	Percentage
Special	10	28%
Regular	26	72%
Total	36	100%

Table 4.3 indicates that 28% are special need trained teachers and 72% are regular trained teachers.

The interpretation is that there are less trained special needs teachers in primary school in Kibwezi Division who could handle special need pupils effectively.

TABLE 4.3.1 SPECIAL NEEDS CHILDREN: VISUAL IMPAIRED

Response	Frequency	Percentage
Yes	5	14%
No	31	86%
Total	36	100%

The table 4.3.1 shows that those children who are visually impaired, “yes” scored 14% while “no” scored 86%.

Interpretation: there are less cases of visually impaired children in Kibwezi Division.

TABLE 4.3.2 MENTALLY IMPAIRED

Response	Frequency	Percentage
Yes	22	61%
No	14	39%
Total	36	100%

From the above table data shows that mentally impaired children, “yes” scored 61 while “no” scored 39.

Interpretation: This shows that mentally impaired children’s case is common in primary schools in Kibwezi Division.

TABLE 4.3.3 HEARING IMPAIRED

Response	Frequency	Percentage
Yes	25	69%
No	11	31%
Total	36	100%

The table indicates that children with hearing impairment “yes” scored 69% while “no” scored 31%.

This means that hearing impairment is a common problem resulting to learning difficulties.

TABLE 4.3.4 PHYSICAL HANDICAPPED

Response	Frequency	Percentage
Yes	10	28%
No	26	72%
Total	36	100%

The table above shows that “yes” respondent for physically handicapped children scored 28% while “no” scored 72%. This indicates that there are less cases of physically handicapped children in primary schools in Kibwezi Division.

TABLE 4.5: ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE OF LEARNERS WITH LEARNING DIFFICULTIES TO ABLE ONES

Response	Frequency	Percentage
Excellent	0	0%
Good	1	3%
Average	5	14%
Bad	20	55%
Worst	10	28%
Total	36	100%

The table shows that none of the special need child is excellent, the specified need children excellent scored 0%, good 3%, average scored 14%. Bad scored 55% and last but not least worst scored 28%.

The table shows that special needs children face challenges in learning which is reflected by poor performance in exams. As per the table above, bad and worst cover the largest percentage. This implies that most pupils with learning difficulties perform poorly in Kibwezi Division.

TABLE 4.6 NUMBER OF PUPILS WITH LEARNING DIFFICULTIES AS PER CLASS

Response	Frequency	Percentage
Mid-Primary	10	28%
Low Classes	2	56%
Upper Classes	6	16%
Total	36	100%

The table 4.6 shows that the highest percentage of pupils with learning difficulties are in lower classes, followed by those in middle upper. The smallest percentage is on upper primary. This can be as a result of improved teaching and learning process or dropping out of learners with learning difficulties.

TABLE 4.7 TEACHERS' RESPONSE TO POOR PERFORMANCE

Response	Frequency	Percentage
Adopt Better Methods	5	14%
Remedy	16	44%
Conducive Environment	5	14%
Repetition	10	28%
Total	36	100%

The respondents show that 14% adopt better methods of teaching, 44% carry out remedial work, 14% set a conducive learning environment while some learners with learning difficulties repeat the same class after annual exam.

The attitude for repeating pupils with learning difficulties may be the cause as to why the number is becoming less in the upper classes as the learners drop out from school in Kibwezi Division.

**TABLE 4.8 TEACHING APPROACH OF TEACHERS
SPECIAL NEED CHILDREN**

Response	Frequency	Percentage
i) Introduce I.E.P	20	56%
ii) Advise the child to take medicine	10	28%
iii) Understand child's level then give adequate work	6	16%
TOTAL	36	100%

Table 4.8 shows that teachers have discovered the speed of learning of these children and have laid strategies on how to help them keep phase with the rest. The data shows that majority deploy special methods of imparting knowledge through understanding their abilities. A considerate number of teachers give adequate work to the child depending on the ability of the child (IEP). Others advise them to keep on taking medicine thinking that this would eradicate the condition of inability.

TABLE 4.9: INTELLECTUAL POTENTIAL OF SPECIAL NEEDS CHILDREN

Response	Frequency	Percentage
i. M.R.	6	16%
ii. V.I.	15	42%
iii. H.I	15	42
TOTAL	36	100%

From the data above, visually impaired respondents and hearing impaired respondents are equal in percentage (42%). This means that the V.I and H.I children are academically fit like the normal children despite their impairment. The mentally retarded respondent scored 16%.

Respondents implies that the learners with hearing impairment and visual impairment in Kibwezi Division have potentials to excel academically if their impairment could be controlled or corrected.

Mentally retarded have rarely little intellectual residue to be invented.

TABLE 4.10: EXTRA CURRICULAR PARTICIPATION OF SPECIAL NEED CHILD

Response	Frequency	Percentage
V.I	10	28%
H.I	24	67%
M.R	2	5%
TOTAL	36	100%

The table 4.10 above shows that respondent for H.I scores the highest percentage 67% then followed by V.I respondents, 28% and lastly M.R. respondents which scored 5%. This implies that children with hearing impairment have the ability to participate in extra curricular activities just like any normal child in Kibwezi Division. Visually impaired children are little bit limited to activities which require less sense of sight like music and poems. Mentally retarded lack the opportunity to challenge their counterparts because such extra-curricular activities require faster thinking and conceptuality.

TABLE 4.11: REMEDING LEARNERS WITH LEARNING DIFFICULTIES

Responses	Frequency	Percentage
Oftenly	20	55%
Rarely	14	39%
Hardly	2	6%
TOTAL	36	100%

From the table 4.11, the respondents “oftenly” scored the highest percentage 55%. Rarely scored 39% and hardly scored 6%. This data shows that majority of the teachers carry out remedial work to pupils with learning difficulties in Kibwezi Division.

TABLE 4.12: NUMBER OF TRAINED SPECIAL NEED TEACHERS PER SCHOOL

Responses	Frequency	Percentage
More than one	5	14%
One	13	36%
None	18	50%
TOTAL	36	100%

The table 4.12 above shows that trained special need teacher respondents “more than one” scored 14%, “one” scored 36% and none scored 50%.

The data shows that most of the primary school in Kibwezi Division have no trained special need teachers to handle special need children effectively.

TABLE 4.13: LEARNERS WITH LEARNING DIFFICULTIES DROPOUT

Responses	Frequency	Percentage
Lower Class 1 - 3	18	22%
Middle Upper 4 - 6	10	28%
Upper Classes 7 - 8	18	50%
TOTAL	36	100%

The table 4.13 above shows school drop-out of learners with learning difficulties. According to the respondents, the largest number of school drop-out is in upper classes scoring 50 % followed by middle upper scoring 28%. From this data, it can be concluded that very few learners with learning difficulties manage to complete eight years primary course in Kibwezi Division.

TABLE 4.14 CAUSES OF LEARNING DIFFICULTIES

Responses	Frequency	Percentage
Mental Retardation	15	14%
Visual impairment	11	30%
Hearing impairment	15	42%
Physically handicapped	05	14%
TOTAL	36	100%

Respondent on the table 4.14 shows that learning difficulties caused by mentally retarded scored 14% visually impaired scored 30%, hearing impaired scored 42% and physically handicapped scored 14%. The data shows that major cause of the learners with learning difficulties is hearing impairment in Kibwezi Division. Then followed by visual impairment. Cases of mental retardation and physical handicapped are witnessed but very acute.

TABLE 4.15: TRADITIONAL BELIEFS ON LEARNERS WITH LEARNING DIFFICULTIES:

RESPONSE	FREQUENCY	PERCENTAGE
Witchcraft	18	50%
Ancestral spirits	08	22%
Inheritance genes	05	14%
Demons	05	14%
Total	36	100%

Table 4.15 drawn above shows that the highest score was witchcraft 50% followed by ancestral spirits scoring 22% while inheritance and demons responses earned 14% respectively. This implies that according to beliefs associated with learning difficulties, witchcraft is strongly believed as a major cause.

TABLE 4.16: LEARNING ABILITY OF LEARNERS WITH DIFFICULTIES

RESPONSE	FREQUENCY	PERCENTAGE
No	30	83%
Yes	06	17%
Total	36	100%

From the data above it is evident that “no” respondents outnumbered the “yes” respondents. The “no” answers were 30 out of 36 (83%) while “yes” were only 6 (17%). This means that children who are learning together with those “normal” have slow speed of learning.

CHAPTER FIVE

DISCUSSION, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION:

5.1 DISCUSSION

The researcher started this work by exhaustively using all the knowledge, observation and things he has experienced as concerns learners with learning difficulties to form the background history of the whole matter. The researcher used the above strategies to be able to form a foundation on what to researcher managed to formulate the statement of the problem, the purpose of study and set out objectives of the study.

In order to be direct to the points required the researcher formulated questionnaire which enabled the researcher to capture the wanted information. Before the researcher left for investigations, factors like limitation and delimitation had to be put into consideration. Such factors contributed towards the research success.

The researcher consulted several authors and references in order to go to the field to collect information from the area put into research. From the field the researcher collected information which helped in achieving research objectives.

The data collected show that researcher obtained the information required for the study. The results here basing on learners with learning difficulties show that the root cause is as a result of disabilities of diverse degrees and more so the negative attitude of teachers towards learners with learning difficulties.

5.2 CONCLUSION

According to the findings carried out in chapter four in this special study paper, indicators show that questions set out to investigate were mostly to find children with learning difficulties, the results show schools to be the main centres where

the challenges the learner experience he/she has the delimitation that teachers as the targeted population played a great role in equipping the researcher with the right information.

In Kibwezi Division, the data collected show that every primary school has a special needs children who experiences learning difficulties (table 4.2)

According to the respondent witness visually impaired scored 86% table 4.4, mentally impaired scored 61%, table 4.4.2, hearing impaired scored 69%, table 4.4.3 and physically handicapped scored 28%, table 4.4.4. Observing the percentages, most of the learners with disabilities in descending order are visually impaired. Hearing impaired, mentally retarded and physically handicapped. The degree of disability ranges from mild to profound cases in every category. Learners with learning difficulties are caused by the above states disabilities. See table 4.14.

As the saying goes, disability is not inability, visually impaired and hearing impaired children are intellectually potentially equal in academic performance if aided fully. Table 4.9 respondents show that both V.I and H.I can perform well academically just like a normal child if only visual aids and hearing aids are provided respectively.

However, questions set to capture the objective question on effects of learning difficulties in academic performance with learners with visual impairment, mentally handicapped and hearing impaired is not the same in different fields. Indoor learning and outdoor learning experiences of learners with learning difficulties differ from one disability to another. Table 4.16 shows that learners with learning difficulties are unable to comprehend and interpret concepts than normal peers in the same class do at ease.

Outdoor activities that involves extra curricular work in a field is where learners with learning difficulties excel and compensate for their disability as seen with hearing impairment children on table 4.10.

As stated in the headline or title of this research, it is clearly evident that learners with learning difficulties perform poorly in exams as shown on table 4.5. Bad performance of the learners with learning difficulties call for negative and positive attitudual responses to the teachers. Table 4.7 shows that a good number of teachers (44%) remedy learners with learning difficulties while 78% repeat them in the same class after an academic year.

Table 4.6 shows number of pupils with learning difficulties as per class in Kibwezi Division. In lower primary that the number is big but as they progress to middle and upper classes the number decreases alarmingly. The question is, where do these learners with learning difficulties registered in lower classes go? Table 4.13 showing school drop out of learners with learning difficulties increases drastically from middle to upper classes. This answers the question as to why the number of learners with learning difficulties decreases tremendously in middle and upper classes.

5.3 RECOMMENDATIONS

Findings done to capture the population of special need children who experience learning difficulties in Kibwezi Division show that the number included in the mainstream in the public primary schools is not yet encouraging because the results shown in table 4.1 is 67%. Twenty seven percent is still at home probably kept indoors hidden from the public. There are some cases of some being hospitalized and others nursed in churches' homes.

As shown on table 4.15, there are some traditional beliefs believed to be the cause of learning difficulties to some learners. These beliefs may lead to special need children be kept indoors and live imprisonment life for fear of shame and disgrace.

To curb this unpleasing deed, awareness through means such as media services and in public gatherings should be conducted to help save the future standards of the disadvantages children.

This can best be done by community health workers, special need teachers, personnel from the ministry of Education in conjunction with the Ministry for Health. Non Governmental Organizations if involved can participate greatly.

Schools in Kibwezi Division should be provided with trained special need teachers capable of handling special need pupils who experience learning difficulties in their mainstreams. Table 4.3 shows that most of the schools in Kibwezi Division lack specialized professionally trained teachers to handle special need children.

The Government should employ trained personnel to handle special need children. The Government through the Ministry of Education should organize refresher course for regular teachers based better methods of teaching special need learners experiencing learning difficulties. As Ndurumo (1993, 15) quoted regular training programmes should be introduced as a special aspect of understanding children. Teachers should also be given a rudimentary acquaintance with the possible connection between physical handicap and backwardness.

In structural materials and learning equipment for special need learners should be catered for by the Ministry of education. Bracke machine hearing aids, wheel chairs, crutches, calipers, mobile boards, and so on are expensive and a provision

for this should be put into consideration when planning for free primary education in Kenya.

In inclusive setting, learners with learning difficulties should be positioned well in right places depending on their disability. Hearing impaired should be positioned near the teacher to enable him/her hear well. Visually impaired should also be sat near the chalkboard to enable him/her see well. Profound or severe cases should be provide with hearing aids for the deafness and spectacles for visually impaired.

Physically handicapped children should be sat on desks made to compensate their disability. Wheelchairs, walking crutches should be provided.

Environmental setting of the school compound should be compatible to accessibility of special need learners to curb learning difficulties both inside and outside classroom tasks.

Special need children are prone to learning difficulties than the normal children. It is therefore important for the teacher to prepare the lesson to present bearing in mind the special need learner. The teacher should choose and prepare good teaching and learning aids suitable to the learners' disability.

The teacher should also choose better method of teaching to reach the learner and impart knowledge, skill and attitudinal behaviour change for better future.

Remedial work should be carried out to meet learners with learning difficulties. Special need learners have low learning ability than the normal ones. See table 4.16. This means the scheduled time duration of time is not enough for the slow learners to grasp concepts. They need extra time which can only be created by enhancing remedial work apart from class hours. This calls for teachers' devotion,

sacrifice and parental care and concern in this noble profession to comply the challenge.

As much as learners with learning difficulties perform, the teachers should not have negative attitude toward their poor performance but instead should encourage them and identify their strong areas of performance for instance extra-curricular activities and help to develop them.

Besides inclusive education whereby special need teachers are taught together with normal ones in mainstream in public primary schools, there is need for special schools and units in Kibwezi Division that cater for severe mentally retarded ones. The need for such schools was there even before Kenya got her independence in 1963. Thika Primary School for the blind, Nyangoma School for the deaf, Mumials School for the deaf, Jacaranda school for the mentally handicapped, the Aga Khan Special School and Dagoretti unit for the deaf existed. Since then, the population in question has grown bigger and bigger and people are yielding to this crucial public need for special education of their disabled children. Having such schools is a right but not a privilege. Ranking school according to the performance in National Exam results undermine pupils ability especially learners with learning difficulties and belittle teachers' efforts thus causing them to have negative attitude towards learners with learning difficulties.

Positioning of schools according to their performance was based on mean score such meriting would map the school in a better position if at all the learners with learning difficulties are eliminated. Teachers having this one in mind compel learners with learning difficulties repeat classes and eventually drop out from school. See table 4.14.

This kind of move is not learners centered but teachers centered looking for fame, honour and personal gain at the expense of the learner. Learners with learning difficulties should be given an opportunity to learn and discover the talents for his/her bright future.

All in all, there is need for collective responsibility and mutual understanding by relevant bodies concerned to assist the learners with learning difficulties achieve desired educational goals in all levels.

The government through the ministry of education should state good education policies for learners with learning difficulties in higher education levels such that teachers' efforts are not doomed at primary level where special education is being offered. Education is life and is a right to every person.

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APPENDICES

APPENDIX I

Dear respondent,

I am in the process of collecting information on the above topic for the purpose of helping analyze data on the teachers' attitude towards the academic performance of learners with learning difficulties in Kibwezi Division Kibwezi District. This is a survey and not supposed to test any body or for a personal gain. The data collected will assist in curbing the above cited in our schools. The information provided will be treated in absolute confidentiality. Please tick your responses to the items in the questionnaire provided does not write your name on the questionnaire.

Thank you very much for your anticipated positive responses

Yours faithfully,

Francis M. Sandu