

**ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE OF THE PHYSICALLY HANDICAPPED
IN REGULAR SCHOOLS; A CASE STUDY OF SELECTED PRIMARY
SCHOOLS IN KAPTAMA ZONE, MT.ELGON DISTRICT, KENYA**

BY

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BED/20197/81/DF

**A RESEARCH PROJECT SUBMITTED TO THE INSTITUTE OF OPEN
AND DISTANCE LEARNING IN PARTIAL FULFILMENT OF
THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE AWARD OF A DEGREE
OF EDUCATION IN SPECIAL NEEDS EDUCATION OF
KAMPALA INTERNATIONAL UNIVERSITY**

APRIL 2010

DECLARATION

I, **Bowon Geoffrey Joseph**, do hereby declare that this research project is my original work and has never been submitted for any academic award. Where the works of other scholars have been cited, due acknowledgment has been made.

Signature..........

Bowon Geoffrey Joseph

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.

Supervisor.....

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Date.....*22/08/2020*

DEDICATION

This research is dedicated to my wife Hellen Cheruto for her heartily support throughout this course of study.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

My sincere gratitude goes to my supervisor Mr. Ssekajugo Derrick for the advice and guidance while I was writing this project and also for providing useful references in order to improve the quality of this project. I'm equally indebted to all my family members; my wife Hellen, my children: Sylvester, Isaac, Daniel and Naomi and all the lecturers of Kampala International University.. May God reward you all for the support.

LIST OF ACCRONYMS

CWD	Children with Disabilities
FGD	-- Focus Group Discussion
G.O.K	-- Government of Kenya
U.N.D.P	- United Nations Developmental Program
UNESCO	- United Nation Education, Scientific and Cultural Organization
UNICEF	--United Nations Children's Fund

ABSTRACT

This study was intended to examine the challenges of Inclusion of children with physical Disabilities in regular primary schools in Kaptama zone, Kaptama division, Mt.Elgon District, Kenya. All sorts of secondary data viewed necessary to the study were revisited and these gave the researcher a clear picture of what the entire study was to entail.

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 Mt.Elgon District Kenya. Questionnaires were adopted as the major instruments for data collection after which data were processed, analyzed and interpreted. Information obtained from the research study was presented and analyzed using narratives, and statistical figures. This report provided 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.

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CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background to the study

In Kenya the population of people with disability is estimated at ten percent of the total population. About 25 percent of these are children of school going age. Out of the total of 750,000, an estimated 90,000 have been identified and assessed. (Government of Kenya, 2000). However only 14,614 are enrolled in educational programmes for children with disabilities; while an equivalent number are integrated in regular schools. This implies that over 90 percent of handicapped children are either, at home or in regular schools. (Government of Kenya, 2000)

The increase in the number of slow learners and children with learning disabilities especially the physically handicap in schools in Africa has become a major issue and concern. (Bellany C. 1999). the situation is reflected in various schools –leaving examinations, where an average of 30 percent of the results is below average or failures each year. Although there are no statistical records available in most African countries on the number of children and youth with learning disabilities, it is believed that about 8 percent of the students in school are experiencing learning difficulties in the classroom.

To provide education for the children with any special needs, there must be adjustments which have to be financed by someone to enable free access. The schools are required to adjust to accommodate various needs according to the special disabilities of the children in the local community. Currently there is no law that guides this adjustment, making most schools at no

obligation to provide disabilities friendly education. Many have therefore missed school all together

Prior to 2003, of the children with physical disabilities who entered school. Many only able to enroll in special schools or annexes which education which provided vocational training. In 2003, Kenya introduced free primary education which allowed children to receive free education. Children with disabilities were to be the priority beneficiaries of this program. As a result of this, the enrolment of children increased to 150%. However increase in the there was no proportionate increase in the enrolment of children with disabilities.

The free education in primary schools confirms to target children with disabilities but the government has not set on the infrastructures in schools necessary for their integration. The physical structures including the walk ways, toilets, and corridors are not accessible and special education equipment such as Braille machines and bearing aids are not available. (UNESCO 2005). The teachers are not able to attend to the unique learning needs of children with disabilities. Moreover few teachers have knowledge and skills to educate these children. These concerns have contributed to the high dropout rate of children with disabilities.

The Kenya's education system offers an inappropriate curriculum for CWDs. The curriculum at primary level has become increasingly curriculum irrelevant to the skills that these children need in their day today lives outside school. The emphasis is on teaching of independent living skills. (Kandyomunda B.1998).Most CWDs do not go beyond primary level. Therefore the education they receive in primary is critical as it is the formulation for their livelihood.

The right to education is universally as fundamental, but this is not the case in Kenya, as over 70 percent of school age children with physical disabilities are either at school at home or enrolled in regular schools with little or no specialized help (Jones, H, 2002) Many people, including teachers, expect pupils with special needs to spend their lives at home and not to work. The situation is made worse when they are physically and spiritually abused and hence need for the study.

1.2 Statement of the problem

It's unfortunate that pupils with physical disabilities still face the same school structures and systems both in instruction and examination. This is unfortunate given the fact that children without disabilities have advantages in various areas and cannot therefore be expected to fairly compete with pupils with disabilities. It's from such challenges that the study was be undertaken.

1.3 Purpose of the study

The purpose of this study was to investigate the challenges children with disabilities face in an inclusive setting.

1.4 Objectives of the study

1.4.1 General objective

The general objective of the study was to examine the challenges of inclusion of children with physical Disabilities in regular primary schools in Mt.Elgon District, Kenya.

1.4.2 Specific objectives

Specific objectives of study were:

- To determine problems faced by children with physical disabilities in accessing education.
- To examine the teaching and learning materials used in the teaching of the physically handicapped learners.
- Determine the relevance of the education currently offered to children with physical disabilities.
- To establish measures and solutions that can avert the problem

1.5 Research questions

- What are the problems faced by children with physical disabilities in accessing education.
- What are the teaching and learning materials used in the teaching of the physically handicapped learners.
- Is the Kenyan education system relevant to children with physical disabilities?
- What measures should be put in place for the physically handicapped to access education.

1.6 Scope of the study

The study was carried out in the selected primary schools in Mt.Elgon District, Kenya. The study was limited by the objectives of the study.

1.7 Significance of the study

The study raised awareness and discussion among educational planner, public and private stakeholders concerned with providing basic education and the equalization of opportunities for children with physical disabilities.

Children with physical disabilities need special care and patience so that they do not feel out and therefore the study will advocate for proper care and handling g of these children by the teachers, parents and community at large.

The study focused on the relevance and accessibility levels of the education system of Kenya to children with physical disabilities. This therefore helped government to take into consideration what is necessary for children with disabilities in regards to education.

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.0 Introduction

This chapter discusses the literature related to the study. A lot of literature has been written on children with disabilities for the purpose of the study the following concepts are discussed.

2.1 Definitive Review of physical disability

Gearheart (1980) considers the physically disabled are those with no sensory physical disabilities that require the use modified settings, curriculum presentation or other specified materials to permit maximum social educational development.

2.2 Problems faced by children with disabilities in accessing education

Poverty

Barton and Wamai (1994) held it that general access to education in Kenya is affected by high educational costs and household poverty. The cost of educating a child in a private institution that caters for special needs ranges from about 192 to 641 dollars per term- a considerable expansion a country where, according to the United Nations Human Development Report for 2003, about 46 percent of people live on less than a dollar a day. (UNHDP 2003)

The extreme poverty that affects many Kenyans means that most children will not attend school and more especially children with disabilities and so most of them remain at home doing domestic work.

Even with the introduction of free primary education in the education sector, families with a low household income have difficulties affording the required uniforms, pens, books and scholastic. (UNICEF 2005)

Attitudes

Family perception of the disabled child greatly affects whether the child would be enrolled in school, the type of education they would receive, and the type of school they would attend (government or private). Most of these children are seen as useless and a burden to the family. (UNESCO 2001). At school, and outside of school, the peers of children with disabilities participate in name calling and bullying. At extreme cases, peers beat the children with disabilities. The teacher's attitudes also affect the child access to education. (Jones, H, 2002)

School infrastructure

With the introduction of the free primary education, primary school enrolment almost tripled. This surge of pupils poses challenges for the educational facilities, and for the children with special needs who wish to access them. The enrolment of children with disabilities has increased, yet the physical infrastructure remains inaccessible, preventing them from integrating into the school system. Children with motor

Impairments, hearing impairments, visual impairment and mental illness have found it difficult to cope, and often decide to drop out of school. (Jewell, M. 1990)

There are an inadequate number of instructional materials including Braille equipment, textbooks, sports equipment, and other learning aids, both in the inclusive schools and in the special Schools to meet the needs of children with disabilities. In the units, the lack of resources

and aids makes it difficult for the teachers to effectively instruct children with disabilities.
(UNICEF 2005)

Inadequacy of trained special needs educational teachers

While some challenges generally affect categories of CWDS, there are some which are specific according to each disability.

Children with movement impairment seem to access education less than their counterparts. This is because they require special resources and materials, as compared with children without disabilities. (Peny M. 2000) Crawling was a big problem for those with movement especially when it is raining or in school that had rough terrain.

With inclusive education, some of the CWDs with physical difficulties find it extremely hard to follow teachers' instructions. The class sizes being high imply that the teachers have less time for those with such problems. (UNESCO 2005)

Inadequacy of special needs education teachers is another key challenge. The ratio of special needs teachers compared to the numbers of children with disabilities in inclusive schools is quite large. This strains the teacher, thereby affecting the learning of CWDs. (Christensen, K. 1997).

The current school –based training of teachers in special education is not effective. One the burden of enrolment has led to high teacher / pupil ratio that makes attention for special needs pupils impossible. Inclusion strategies are therefore failing with the introduction of free education. Teachers are burdened by the sheer numbers let alone special needs pupils. (UNICEF 2005).

Poor health and nutrition

Children with physical disabilities have a health problem and affect their accessibility to school since most schools do not have enough health facilities. (Russel-Fox, J. 2001) poor feeding programs also contribute to children with disabilities missing out on education. Most schools do not provide meals for the children and the parents do not have enough money to provide food for the children in school. Some parents have the money but think that it is the responsibility of the schools to provide meals.

2.3 Relevance of the education system to children with disabilities

The school syllabus and mode of instruction tend to benefit the non disabled child more than the CWDs.

2.3.1 Mode of assessment

The mode of assessment is not popular with CWDs especially those in the upper primary section the mode of assessment should suit the special needs of the CWDs especially during final examinations like the Kenya Certificate of Primary Education.(K.C.P.E) (Jones. H. 2002)

2.3.2 Content

The content of instruction in the primary school curriculum includes subjects like English, Kiswahili, Mathematics and others. Some subjects seem abstract especially to children with certain disabilities like the visually impaired. They are not catered for in subjects like science and social studies because they lack Braille instructional materials in such subjects. (Barton T. 1994)

2.3.3 Kenya's education system

The strength of Kenya's education system can be categorized as thus:

According to Coldough (1980), “primary schooling is beneficial to developing countries even when the school quality is low”. Through Kenya’s free primary education policy, a goal was set to achieve University primary Education by the year 2010. This is a major milestone in the education section such commitment is also evidenced by the increasing expenditure in education programmes. (Reloitte and Touche, 2001).

To facilitate the implementation of free primary education, the government has created four grants: the wage bill is for teachers, instructional materials grant is for buying instructional materials. The government with assistance of development partners has funded the free education in primary schools. Under the school facilities grant, adopted for the needs of children with disabilities. (G.O.K 2000).

Quality examination at each level of the education system demonstrates a highly competitive education system.

The provision of education services has been privatized and liberalized, reducing the government responsibility. (G.O.K 2000). The impacts on children with disabilities are both positive and negative. Positively, it broadens their opportunity for education through the numerous additional private schools. However, some private schools do not allow children with disabilities to enroll, as they do not have the adapted infrastructure, and they believe that maintaining them at school is quite expensive.]

An effective education system should adapt to the society social and economic changes quietly. It should be highly sensitive to these changes developing the necessary training, and the output of skills most needed by the country at any time. However, as Brown (1990) noted, Kenya's education system tends to lag behind, which affects the development of society. The weaknesses of Kenya's education systems are as follows;

The education curriculum is becoming increasingly irrelevant (UNICEF, 1989) and yet in area of skill training, there has not been an increase in opportunities at the primary and post primary level. According to Okech (1995), the Kaptamaized curriculum approach to Kenya's education system is mainstreamed highly competitive and examination oriented.

The attitudes of teachers are often negative and many of them have not been trained on strategies to include children with disabilities which can affect the performance of all pupils.

Career guidance and counseling ensure that individuals make the correct occupational choices to develop their talent. This is not widely available at the primary level, and yet as Barton (1994) notes, lack of career guidance for children and adolescents influences the value they attach to education.

CHAPTER THREE

METHODOLOGY

3.0 Introduction

This chapter explains the methods that the researcher used to select the geographical areas, from which research was carried out and methods of selection of respondents. It also explains the methods used to collect process and analyze data.

3.1 Design

This study adopted a quantitative study design. Quantitative method was used since it was most likely to give the number of the physically disabled in schools.

3.2 Research study population

The study involved teachers and parents. The sample included 20 teachers 20 parents.

3.3 Instruments of data collection

The instruments used in collecting data included the questionnaire (open and closed), FGDs in collecting the primary and secondary data, schedules and information from correspondents. Questionnaires were used to collect data from students and teachers while parents/ guardians were interviewed in a focus group discussion.

3.4 Data collection procedures

Permission to conduct the research was obtained from the school administrator through a transmittal letter from the Institute of Open and Distance Learning. Questionnaires were issued to teachers and students. The open ended questions allowed freedom for the respondents to

express their feelings, while closed question generated information free of influence and kept the correspondents focused on subject.

3.5 Data analysis

The results from the questionnaires, interviews and schedules were analyzed separately. Each was analyzed by tally marks and drawing of the frequency tables, from which the conclusions were drawn.

Formula: Percentage (%) = $\frac{F}{N} \times 100$

Total number of respondents

Where F = number of respondents Observed

3.6 Limitations of the study

- The schools selected were far apart and the research had a difficult time moving from each working station to all these schools.
- Money was to buy materials was not available and the researcher had a difficult time financially.
- Some respondents were not cooperative since they never returned the questionnaires.

CHAPTER FOUR

4.0 DATA PRESENTATION, ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

4.1.0 Introduction

In this chapter an attempt is made to interpret and explain the findings. Also key information enables to relate to the specific objectives and give a clear picture of the results.

Data analysis and processing

Table 1 on response rate of the targeted sample

Planned no of response	60	100%
Actual response	40	67%
Non Response	20	33%

Source; (Primary data 2010)

Table 2 on non-response

Type of response	Planned Response	Actual Response	Non- Response
Parents	30	20	10
Teachers	30	20	10
Total	60	40	20

Source; (Primary data 2010)

From table 2 above, actual response from the teacher's respondents was 20 while 20 parents responded.

4.1.2 Social-demographic characteristics of the study population

Table 3: Social-demographic characteristics of the study population

	Frequency	Percentage (100%)
<u>Age of respondents</u>		
18 -25	2	5%
26 -30	3	7.5%
31 -35	6	15%
36 -40	8	20%
41 -45	9	22.5%
46 -50	10	25%
50-55 and above	2	5%
<u>Marital status</u>		
Married	32	80%
Single	8	20%
<u>Level of education</u>		
Primary level	12	30%
Secondary level	7	17.5%
College level	21	52.5%
University level	0	0

Source; (Primary data 2010)

From the findings above 25% of the respondents were aged between 46-49 years,22.5% were aged between 40-44 years, while 15% were aged between 30-34 years. Only 7.5% were aged between 25-29 years. the rest 5% each were aged between 20-24 and 50-55 years.

This was due to the number of teachers in schools being aged as a result from the government freeze on teacher recruitment. Most of the parents below 29 years were not ready to answer questions: this could be due to lack of awareness to issue pertaining to disability.

Married respondents represented 80% of the respondents while 20% were unmarried.

52.5% of the respondent had college level education, mainly due to the teachers respondents.30% were of primary level,17.5% were of secondary level and no respondent had university level education. This could be due to the locality where most of the parents are not highly educated.

And the teachers have only attended primary certificate education

Respondents analysis

4.2 Research question one on the problems faced by children with physical disabilities accessing education

Table 4:Teachers response

Problems	Strongly agree	agree	Disagree	Strongly disagree	Total

Difficulties in movement	6	9	3	2	20
Doing and completing class work	7	5	4	4	20
Playing with others in the field	12	3	3	2	20
Using sanitary facilities	5	6	4	5	20
Level of performance	10	1	3	3	20

Source; (Primary data 2010)

Majority of response indicated that children with physical disabilities were faced by a myriad of problems chief among them being the school infrastructure which did not cater for the physically challenged children. While a minority of the respondents indicated that physically disabled children were not that challenged in an inclusive setup.

One teacher respondent cited the lack of facilities catering for the physically challenged as one of the challenges. These included lack of sanitary facilities for the disabled.

4.3 Research questions two on availability of teaching and learning materials used in teaching of the physically handicapped learners

- 4.3.1 Teachers response
- Table 5

• Response	• Frequency	• Percentage
• Strongly agree	• 4	• 20%
• Agree	• 4	• 20%
• Disagree	• 9	• 45%
• Strongly disagree	• 3	• 15%
• Total	• 20	• 100%

• Source; (Primary data 2010)

- Most teachers' response represented by 45% disagreed that there were teaching learning materials in schools for the physically disabled children.15% strongly disagreed,20% agreed and 20% strongly agreed of the presence of teaching learning aids in the schools.
- One teacher respondent said this was true that schools were lacking the needed teaching materials for the physically disabled learners.

- **4.4 Research questions three on relevance of Kenyan education system to children with physical disabilities.**

- **4.4.1 Teachers response**

- **Table 6**

• Response	• Frequency	• Percentage
• Strongly agree	• 3	• 15%
• Agree	• 4	• 20%
• Disagree	• 8	• 40%
• Strongly disagree	• 5	• 25%
• Total	• 20	• 100%

- **Source; (Primary data 2010)**

- Out of 20 respondents 65 percent said that education system in Kenya catered for the physically disabled only in paper and not practically. While 35 percent of the respondents saw the system as well structured to cater for the physically disabled children.

- **4.4 Research question four on measures put in place for the physically handicapped to access education.**

- **4.4.1 Teachers response**

- **Table 7**

measures	Strongly agree	agree	disagree	Strongly disagree	Total
Integrating the disabled learners	6	6	3	5	20
Retraining the teachers	8	4	6	2	20
Establishing Special schools	2	6	4	8	20
Modifying curriculum	7	4	5	4	20
Modifying the infrastructure	10	3	6	1	20

- **Source; primary data (2010)**

- Teacher's respondents were unanimous on the need to put into place a better system for dealing with the physically handicapped in an inclusive school. Majority of response said that the government should intervene to mitigate the challenges faced by physically challenged children.

CHAPTER FIVE

DISCUSSION, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.0 Introduction

In this chapter, the researcher discusses the findings of the study by identifying major findings, and commenting on possible reasons why the results appear as they are. These are compared to results of previous research by other researchers. The researcher also drew conclusion and finally made recommendations from the study findings.

5.1 Discussion

Concerning problems faced by children with physical disabilities in accessing education The findings revealed that the major obstacle to helping learners with special needs 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.

5.2 Conclusions

The study revealed that there is a big shortage of special needs trained teachers as majority of teachers in the province are of Primary one professional grades and do not have enough skills, expertise and/or knowledge to teach learners with special needs.

5.3 Recommendations

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

Concerning the inadequacy of trained special needs teachers and their shortage in schools, there is great need 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.

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.

5.4 Areas of further research

More research should be carried out on the impact of free primary education on the physically challenged learner's Education.

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APPENDICES

APPENDICE A

INTERVIEW GUIDE FOR PARENTS

1. .Do you have a physically disabled child at your home ?
2. .Which problems do the physically disabled learners experience ?
3. Do you think the physically disabled learners are adequately provided with teaching and learning materials in schools?
4. Do the physically disabled learners enjoy co-curricular activities?
5. Do you think teachers use the teaching and learning materials adequately to help the physically disabled learners?
6. Is the Kenyan Education system relevant to children with physical disabilities?
7. Do you think the physically disabled learners are fairly assessed?
8. Do you think these learners should have their own special schools?
9. Do you think teachers are well trained to handle such learners?
10. What measures should the government put in place to overcome the challenges facing these children?

APPENDIX B

QUESTIONNAIRE FOR TEACHERS

Dear respondent,

I am a student from Kampala International University, Institute of Open and Distance Learning.

I am collecting data in relation to challenges faced by learners with physical disabilities in Kaptama zone, Kaptama division, Mt Elgon district, Kenya. I request for your cooperation and promise not to take a lot of your time.

Personal details

A) Sex: Male Female.....

B) Age

Age bracket	Tick where appropriate
18-25 years	
26-30 years	
31-35 years	
36-40 years	
41-45 years	
46 -50 years	
50-55 years and above	

B) Education level

Please indicate your educational level

Educational/professional level	Tick where appropriate
Primary education	
Secondary education	
Tertiary/college level	
University level	

1) Do you have any physical disabled learner in your school?

Yes No

2) Which problem do physical disabled learners experience in your school?

Tick where appropriate

(a) Difficulties in movement			
(b) Doing and completing class work			
(c) Playing with others in the field			
(d) using the sanitation facilities			
(e) level of performance			
(f)			

3).Do you think the physical hand capped learners are adequately provided with teaching and learning materials in schools?

Tick where appropriate

Strongly agree	
Agree	
Disagree	
Strongly disagree	

4) Do you think teachers use the available teaching and learning materials adequately to help the physically disabled learners during their learning process.

	Tick where necessary
Strongly agree	
Agree	
Disagree	
Strongly disagree	

5) Is the Kenyan education system relevant to children with physical disabilities.

Yes No

Briefly explain

6) Do you think the mode of assessment for the physically disabled learners used in Kenyan education system is fair?

	Tick where necessary
Strongly agree	
Agree	
Disagree	
Strongly disagree	

7) Do you think the physically handicapped children should be in the mainstream classes in special schools or units?

	Tick where necessary
Strongly agree	
Agree	
Disagree	
Strongly disagree	

8) Do you think teachers are adequately trained to handle such learners in regular schools?

	Tick where necessary
Strongly agree	
Agree	
Disagree	
Strongly disagree	

9) What measures do you think should be put in place to cater for the physically disabled learners?

Briefly explain

Thank you