

**THE IMPACT OF TEACHING RESOURCES ON
THE ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE OF
MENTALLY RETARDED LEARNERS
IN SPECIAL UNITS IN
LUGARI DISTRICT,
KENYA.**

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DECLARATION

I, JELIMO JANETH, do hereby declare that this is my original work, except where acknowledged and that it has never been submitted to any university or any institution for an award.

Janeth Jelimo

14th Dec. 2008

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DATE

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APPROVAL

This research report has been submitted for examination with approval as the candidates' university supervisor.

Signed.....

Date.....14th Dec. 2008.

TINDI SEJE

DEDICATION

I dedicate this work to my loving mother flora Koros.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

My sincere gratitude is to the following; the almighty God for the gift of life, my supervisor MR. Tindi seje for commending and reviewing my earlier write ups, my mother flora Koros, my aunt Celestine Sigei, brother Ronnie and my comrades.

God bless them all.

DEFINITION OF TERMS.

For the purpose of this study the following terms are defined operationally.

Academic performance; it's the measure of the acquired skills in a subject of study expressed in grades.

Disability; lack of ability to perform task like other normal persons.

Handicap; is a disadvantage caused by disability that limits individual performance of a role that is normal depending on sex, age, cultural and social factors.

Mentally retarded; a person who is intellectually challenged or inability to acquire concepts quick like other normal persons.

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ABSTRACT

The researcher made a study on the impact of teaching resources on the academic performance of mentally retarded learners in the special units in Lugari district, Kenya.

The population from which the finding was drawn was learners and teachers in the special units of mentally retarded learners in Lugari district, Kenya. The researcher used tables and analysis of frequency distribution of the data collected that involved data analysis, editing, coding, classification and tabulation.

The findings were clear that teaching resources has an impact on the academic performance of mentally retarded learners in the special units in Lugari district, Kenya that needs intervention.

The researcher came up with possible conclusion and recommendations as indicated in chapter five of the study.

CHAPTER ONE

THE PROBLEM AND ITS SCOPE

1.1 Background of the study.

According to the Salamanca report (1994) it states that those with special needs must access to special education and effective school for all. The Jomtien conference of the year (1990) also advocated for education for all. It tends to show that there is need for children with special education need to get access to quality education with better learning resources and approaches.

In Lugari district where there are few units for special needs the learners tend to have problems in acquiring education. For they are neglected both in schools and at home as learners who cannot acquire any skill, so they are not productive to the society. This makes them to withdraw and have low self esteem which depicts them as having intellectual deficits. There seems to more attention to the learners than the mental disabled learners at school and in homes.

1.2 Theory of the study.

According to Mark (1966), both hereditary and environmental factors have contributed to the effect of learning activity. The theory attempts to investigate the effects of different types of living environment on the growth of the brain. Rats were used in this theory, where they were raised in three different environments. Some were put in impoverished environment of simple cages with about one rat in a cage. Others, in a standard environment of simple cages with about three rats per cage. In the enriched environment the rats were put in a groups of 12 rats per cage, and large enough. It was provided with playing apparatus such as ladders, wheels boxes, platforms that were changed each day. The rats were stimulated by the cage mates, enriched environment and through their trials on several apparatus. It was a free permissive environment for exploration. In the impoverished environment, the rats lived in individual cages without seeing or playing with each other. Cages were kept in separate quite and dim rooms as opposed to the enriched environment which were bright rooms. At the end of 4 to 10 weeks the brain

were removed for study. The rats in an enriched environment showed greater brain change than the rats in other cages. This was an indication brain functioning changed for the better. In impoverished cages, rats indicated that their brain underwent very little positive modifications.

This animal research has a direct implication for human studies. As observed in rats, enriched experience resulted to anatomy and chemical changes in the rats. It appears to have relevance in human behavior and learning ability. Enriched learning environment with teaching resources will enhance learning abilities. Therefore, the researcher would like to investigate the impact of teaching resources on the academic performance of mentally retarded learners in special units in Lugari district, Kenya.

1.3 Statement of the Problem

In Lugari district, the mentally retarded learners are neglected both in schools and at home as learners who cannot acquire any skills, so not productive in the society. This makes them to withdraw and have low self esteem, which depicts them as having intellectual deficits. There seem to be more attention on academic learners than the mentally disabled learners at schools and homes by parents due to negative attitude attributed to handicap, cultural belief , ignorance and poverty contributes to the sidelining of these learners. Therefore, the researcher wants to investigate the impact of teaching resources on academic performance of mentally retarded learners in special unit in Lugari district, Kenya.

1.4 Purpose of the Study

This study will determine the impact of the teaching resources on academic performance of mentally retarded learners in special unit in Lugari district in Kenya. It is aimed at determining the barriers hindering the learning of learners with the mental disabilities in a class set up, school, home and society. To critically asses the barriers and come up with possible remedies to them so as to improve the learning of learners with mental disabilities in Lugari district in Kenya.

1.5 Objectives of the Study

General objective

This study will determine the impact of the teaching resources on academic performance of mentally retarded learners in special unit in Lugari district in Kenya.

Specific objectives

- 1) To determine the facilities available in mentally retarded special units in Lugari district, Kenya.
- 2) To examine the support service available for the mentally retarded learners in special units in Kenya.
- 3) To investigate the problems encountered by learners with mental disabilities in Lugari district, Kenya, both in and outside the class.
- 4) To establish how the problems encountered by learners with mental disabilities have been managed.
- 5) To determine the impact of the teaching resources on academic performance of mentally retarded learners in special unit in Lugari district in Kenya.

1.6 Scope of the Study.

Lugari district is in western region of Kenya. It is one of the eight districts in western province .it has three division thus Lugari, Likuyani and Matete. Lugari and Likuyani are settlement areas and people living here are of different ethnical background. The people grow maize beans and sugarcane which is economic activities. They also keep dairy animals. The schools are mainly regular with a few special units for mentally retarded learners. The medium of instruction in Lugari and Likuyani is Kiswahili and English. Kiswahili is taken as the mother tongue in the catchments area due diversity of the languages. In Matete, the mother tongue is used in schools and Kiswahili is the second language of instruction.

Lugari district is bordered by Uasin Gishu district in the East, Bungoma district in the West, North Trans-nzoia district and south –Kakamega district.

1.7 Significance of the Study.

The researcher intended to come up with relevant information that can be utilized by educators of the learners with mental disabilities so as to enhance their learning.

Information may be used by educational officers to plan for appropriate curriculum for mentally retarded learners. It may also be used for what type of education resources to be used and approaches appropriate in teaching the learners with mental disabilities by the government.

The community will experience improvement since it will equip the mentally retarded learners with relevant skills that will enable them fit in the community and lead self-reliant life.

The government will benefit from the result of this study by realizing national objective of the education thus education for all, which quality education.

To the researcher the study will give him the opportunity to discover the problem that lead to poor performance in mentally retarded learners and the solutions that can be put in place to enhance it, which will result to self-reliant to retarded learners and job placement.

1.8. Research Question

1. Which facilities are available in mentally retarded special units?
2. Which support services available for the mentally retarded learners in special units in Kenya?
3. What are the problems encountered by learners with mental disabilities in Lugari district, Kenya, both in and outside the class?.

4. How are the problems encountered by learners with mental disabilities have been managed?

5. What is the impact of the teaching resources on academic performance of mentally retarded learners in special unit in Lugari district in Kenya?

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

According to Heber (1959), defined mental intellectual retardation as sub-average general intellectual functioning associated with impairment in adaptive behavior. They fall in four levels of retardations namely mild, moderate, severe, and profound. Sometimes referred to as mentally handicapped. It refers to one whose general intellectual functioning is significantly subaverage, existing concurrently with deficit in adaptive behaviors and is manifested during developmental period. (American Association on mental Deficiency definition, Grossman 1983)

General intellectual functioning refers to the score obtained on an individually administered intelligence test while significantly sub-average means an intelligent quotient of 70% and below. In addition, deficits in adaptive behaviors refers to individual adaptation to the demands of the environment, that lag in general maturation, problem in learning and poor self-help skills like dressing, feeding and toileting. Lastly, developmental period is that between birth and around 18 years old.

The following are possible indication of mentally retarded children in early childhood; delayed speech, no words by 18 months, and fewer than 100 words by 30 months. He cannot make speech which is approximately to that of an adult of 6 years, delayed motor development thus cannot sit alone by 12 months and will walk later than 24 month. He cannot hop by the age of 4 years. Delayed psychomotor development where the learners cannot pile 5 or 6 small blocks into a tower by the age of 3 years and finds it difficult in holding a pencil and cannot scribble.

They also delay development of common sense. This is to say they do not have enough common sense to avoid home dangers such as knives, fire by the age of 7 years and even recognize single words by the age of 8 years. The intervention of this area of special needs include medical intervention, psychological parent counseling, and behavior modification, social and educational intervention.

According to Mark (1966) hereditary and environmental are factors contributing to effects of learning ability. A rich environment is free and permissive for exploration than impoverished environment. Whereas Coombs (1995) says that material preparation enhances learning ability. He concurs with Macharia (1994) who says that materials used by teachers makes the learning process more effective in class rooms. It stimulates captures interest, clarify abstract concepts to concrete dimension and evokes responses to the learners. He concurs with Bagala (1978) who says that audio visual materials makes learning concrete and real hence more permanent retention of the subject matters than does verbal instruction.

According to Ngaroga (1996:235), different types of learning materials help learners acquire knowledge. He also concurs with Farrant (1977) argues that a teachers work consists largely of communicating experiences to the child. It can be by sound, sight and teaching aids is a wide range of teaching than hearing.

According to Allan (1995), technology has two instructional capabilities in learning symbols systems (words, picture component, and graph) where text narrative alone is insufficient. Learning with technological media like films television and video draw up symbols that are transient and depict motion. This improves comprehension among learners for sound and images are presented together.

According to Sadke (2000), 1970's courts decision and federal law has established five critical principles of special education. Appropriate education that needed the children with disability to have the right to earn education involving the actual diagnosis of individual needs as well as responsive program to suit their needs. These learners are to learn in a regular classroom with the aid of special materials and supportive services. It concurs with UNESCO source book (1972), list describing a variety of learning materials that can be used to educate learners.

Rambhai (2001) says learning activities include an arrangement of teaching aids, questioning, explanations, and observations, visits, handling of apparatus, models, charts

and specimens. This results to active participation of the learner in the stimulus situation provided by the teacher in the class resulting to effective concepts attaining.

CHAPTER THREE

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY.

3.1 Design

The qualitative and quantitative methods of research were employed in the study to investigate the impact of teaching resources on the academic performance of mentally retarded learners.

3.2 Research Environment.

The research was conducted in 5 special unit in each zone thus Matete, Likuyani and Lugari divisions. Making a total of 20 special units samples in Lugari district, Kenya.

3.3 Research Subjects.

The study included teachers in the special units for mentally retarded learners and the learners. 20 teachers and 20 learners making a total of 40.

3.4 Research Instrument.

The researcher used a researcher made questionnaire and interview guide question. The questionnaire shall contain 10 close ended questions for teachers and 6 for learners.

3.5 Data collection procedures.

The researcher obtained an introductory letter from the institution of distance learning department of Kampala International University to the district education officer Lugari district, Kenya. The district education officer then wrote a letter to selected study schools introducing the researcher to them. The head teacher permitted and authorized the researcher to conduct the study. The researcher then was introduced to the teacher in charge of the unit for special needs who guided the researcher access to the learners and teachers in the unit.

3.6 Data Treatment

The researcher used tables made of frequencies which were turned into percentages to treat data from the field. It was out of this that conclusions were made.

4.0 CHAPTER FOUR

DATA ANALYSIS AND RESULTS.

The researcher accepted the questionnaire results given by the respondents. Twenty questionnaires were given to both learners and teachers making a total of 40 questionnaires. This represented 100% of the population involved in the study for the development of education of the mentally retarded learners.

ANALYSIS OF RESPONSES FROM THE QUESTIONNAIRES FOR TEACHERS AND LEARNERS IN THE UNITS.

Number of questionnaires sent to school/units

SCHOOL/UNITS	NUMBER SENT	NUMBER RECEIVED
Teachers in the units	20	20
Learners in the units	20	20
Total	40	40

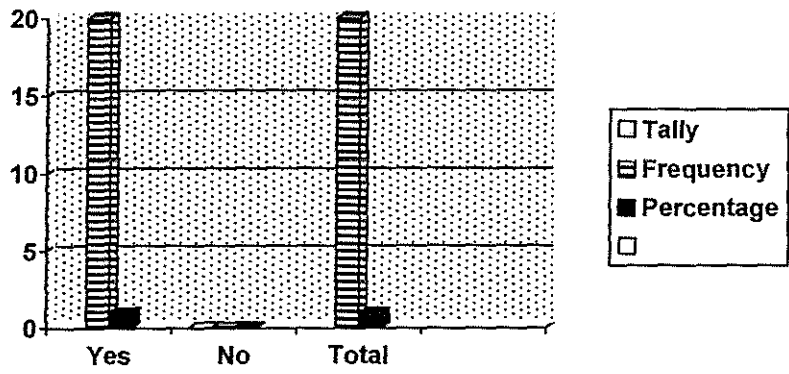
Does the parents' monthly income meet the needs of mentally retarded learners?

Respondent	Tall	Frequency	Percentage
Yes	1	1	5%
No	III III III III	19	95%
		20	100%

The respondent indicate that the parents income do not meet the needs of the mentally retarded learners.

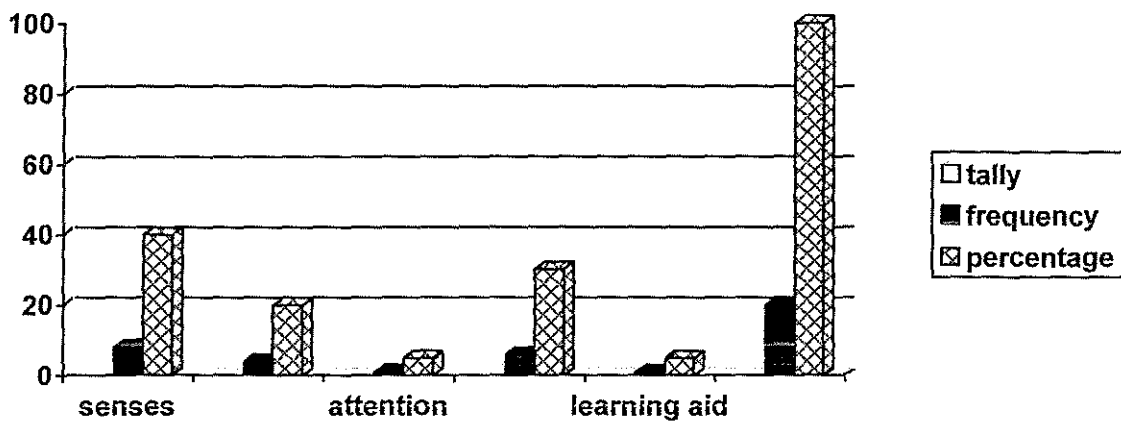
Do the learning resources have an impact on the performance of learners with mental retardation?

Respondent	Tally	Frequency	Percentage
Yes	HHH HHH HHH HHH	20	100
No	0	0	0%
		20	



Reasons.

Respondent	Tally	Frequency	Percentage
All senses are involved in learning	HHH III	8	40%
learners have real life experience and make learning interesting	IIII	4	20%
attractive attention of learners	I	1	5%
learner's understand clearly	HHH I	6	30%
it is easy to explain to learners with a learning aid	I	1	5%
TOTAL		20	100%



The respondent indicates that the learning resources stimulate and involve all the senses in learning activities.

Is the number of mentally retarded learners integrated in the main stream is satisfactory?

Respondent	Tally	Frequency	Percentage
Yes	IIII	4	20%
No	IIII IIII IIII I	16	80%
		20	100%

The mentally retarded learners integrated in the mainstream are not satisfactory.

Number of boys and girls integrated

Respondent	Tally	Frequency	Percentage
Boys	IIII IIII IIII IIII IIII IIII IIII IIII IIII IIII IIII IIII IIII IIII IIII	74	53.62%
Girls	IIII IIII IIII IIII IIII IIII IIII	64	46.38%
TOTAL		138	100.00%

The respondents indicate that more boys are integrated than girls in the main stream.

Are the teachers teaching mentally retarded learners in schools/units are qualified?

Respondent	Tally	Frequency	Percentage
Yes	III	3	15.79%
No	III III III I	16	84.21%
Total		19	100.00%

The respondents indicate that teachers teaching the mentally retarded learners are not all qualified.

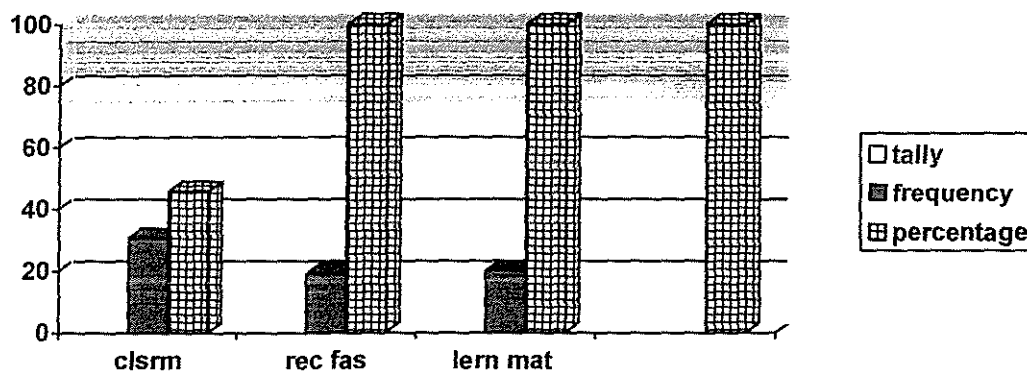
Number of teachers qualified.

Respondent	Tally	Frequency	Percentage
Male	III III	10	62.5%
Female	III I	6	37.5%
Total		16	100.00%

The respondents indicate that more male are trained than the female teachers.

Are the facilities in schools ample for one to obtain good academic performance?

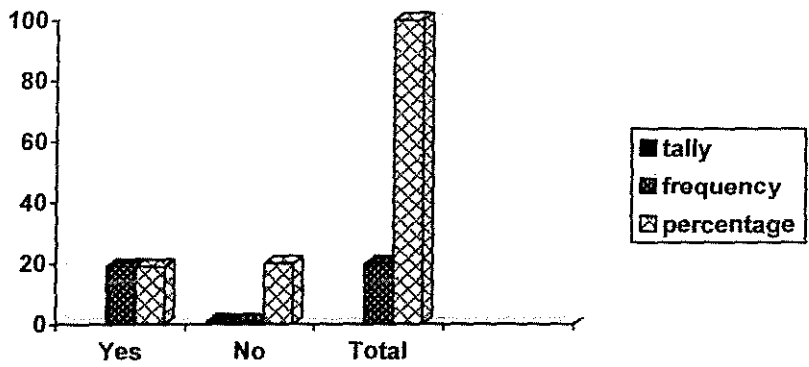
Respondent	Tally		Frequency			Percentage		Total
	Yes	No	Yes	No	Total	Yes	No	
(i) Classrooms	III	HHH HHH HHH I	3	16	19	15.79%	84.21%	100.00%
(ii)recreational facilities	III	HHH I	3	17	20	15%	85%	100.00%
(iii)learning materials	HHH I	III	6	14	20	30%	70%	100.00%



The respondents indicate that the facilities are not ample for one to obtain a good academic performance. Recreational facilities 85%, classrooms 84.24% and learning materials 70% respectively.

Do the mentally retarded learners participate actively when learning materials are used in the lesson?

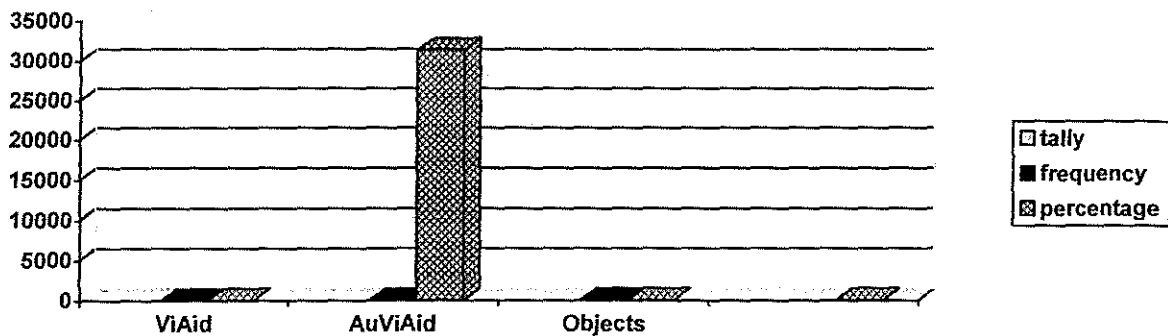
Respondent	Tally	Frequency	Percentage
Yes	HHH HHH HHH IIII	19	95%
No	I	1	5%
Total		20	100.00%



The respondents indicate that the mentally retarded learners participate actively when the learning materials are used in the lessons.

Types of learning materials.

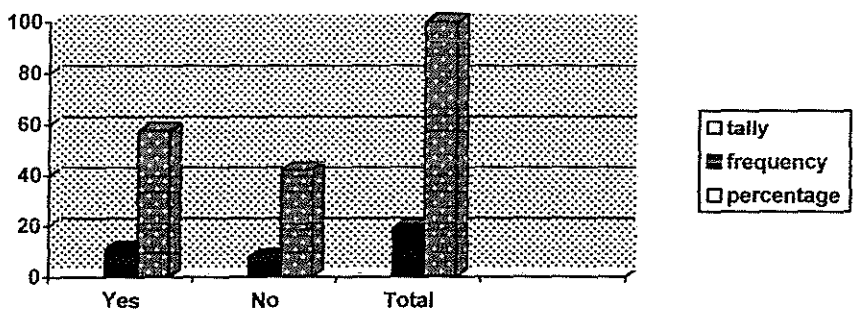
Respondent	Tally		Frequency		Percentage	
	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No
(i) Visual aids	HHH HHH HHH II	-	17	-	33.333%	-
(ii) Audio visual aids	HHH HHH HHH I	-	16	-	31.373%	-
(iii) Handling of real objects	HHH HHH HHH III	-	18	-	35.294%	-
			51	-	100.00%	-



The respondents indicate that handling of the real objects make the mentally retarded learners motivated.

Are support services available to facilitate good academic performance for mentally retarded learners?

Respondent	Tally	Frequency	Percentage
Yes	HHH IIII	11	57.89%
No	HHH III	8	42.11%
Total		19	100.00%

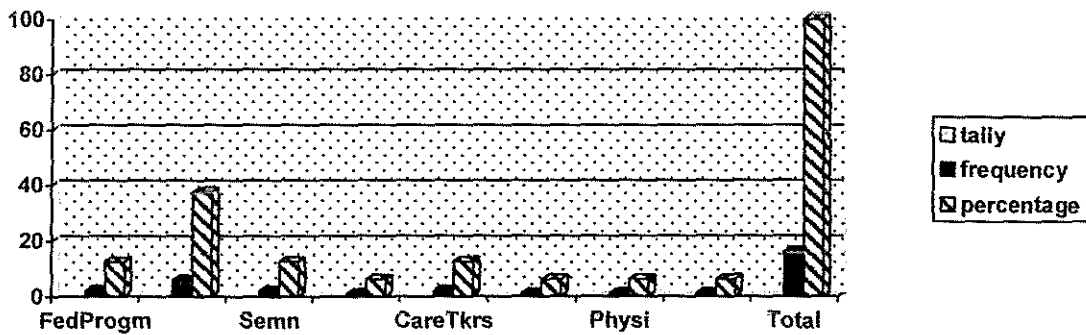


Respondent

indicate that there support service to facilitate good academic performance for mentally retarded learners in the school/units.

Which Support services are necessary?

Respondent	Tally	Frequency	Percentage
Feeding programme	II	2	12.5%
Guiding and counseling	HHH I	6	37.5%
Seminars	II	2	12.5%
Community	I	1	6.25%
Care takers	II	2	12.5%
Vocational programs	I	1	6.25%
Physiotherapy	I	1	6.25%
Social workers	I	1	6.25%
		16	100.00%



The respondent indicates that guiding and counseling support service is quite necessary

Who provides for buying learning resources?

Respondent	Tally	Frequency	Percentage
(i) parents	III	4	11.76%
(ii) Sponsor	II	2	5.88%
(iii) Donor	III III	8	23.53%
(iv) Community	I	1	2.94%
(v) Government	III -III -III III	19	55.88%
Total		34	100.00%

The respondent indicates that the government provides funds for buying learning resources.

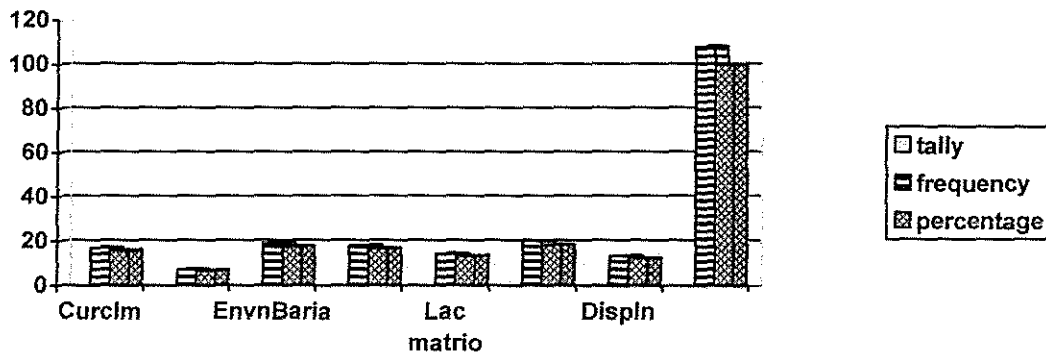
Are there role models of mentally retarded learners leading good life who excelled in vocational institutions in the community?

Respondent	Tally	Frequency	Percentage
Yes	III III	10	52.63%
NO	III III	9	47.37%
TOTAL		19	100.00%

The respondents indicate there are role model mentally retarded learners leading good life from vocational institutions in the community.

Which problems are encountered when teaching learners with mental disabilities?

Respondents	Tally	Frequency	Percentage
(i)curriculum	HHH HHH HHH II	17	15.74%
(ii)stationary	HHH II	7	6.48%
(iii)environmental barriers	HHH HHH HHH IIII	19	17.59%
(iv)lack of funds	HHH HHH HHH IIII	18	16.67%
(v)lack of learning materials	HHH HHH IIII	14	12.96%
(vi)negative attitude	HHH HHH HHH HHH	20	18.52%
(vii)discipline	HHH HHH-III	13	12.04%
Total		108	100.00%



The respondent indicate that negative attitude is the major problem encountered followed by environmental barriers, curriculum and lack of funds represented by 18.52%, 17.59%, 16.67%, and 15.74% respectively.

Do the teaching resources affect the academic performance of learners with mental retardation?

All the respondents (20), answered yes to the above question. When asked why, they gave the following reasons;

CHAPTER FIVE

5.1 DISCUSSION OF RESEARCH FINDINGS.

Table 4.2. Learning resources has an impact on the performance of learners with mental retardation.

Findings

The findings from the table above showed that 100% of the teachers feel that learning resource have an impact on the performance of learners with mental retardation. Coombs (1994) says that materials used by the teachers make learning process more effective in the classroom. It stimulates, capture interest, clarify abstract concepts, to concrete dimension and evoke repulse to the learner. This cells for introduction of a kit to in schools for buying learning resources and encourage the teachers to use them in their lessons at all times to enhance learning and retention of materials for retrieval when need arises.

Table 4.5.the facilities in my school are ample for one to obtain good academic performance.

The result from the table above showed that the facilities in my school are not ample for one to obtain good academic performance. They are represented by classroom -84.21%, recreational facilities-85% and learning materials -70%. Those that agree were represented by 15.79%, 15% and 30%respectively. This agree with Sadkes (2000) says this learners are to learn in regular schools with the aid of special material and supportive services. These calls for the community and stake holders to be sensitized on the importance of equipping the units with better facilities to improve the academic performance. it also set aside funds to support the building of the school facilities to enhance their education.

Table 4.6 the mentally retarded learners participate actively when materials are used in the lesson.

The results from the table above shows that 95% of the teachers agree but 5% disagree, that mentally retarded learners participate actively when materials are used in the lesson. It agrees with Rambhai (2001) who says that if learning materials are used then it results to active participation of the learners in the stimulus situation provided by the teachers in the class resulting to effective concept attaining. Also Ngoraga (1996; pg.235) says that different learning materials help learners acquire knowledge.

They learn by seeing and doing. The facts are easily comprehended and lessens the strain of thinking that bore them.

Table 4.7 (b) the result from the table indicates that many of the schools that is about 37.5% represents social workers in vocational programs, community and physiotherapist. This clearly shows that this is an important tool in creating self esteem in mentally retarded learners. Ndarumo (1993) says this support services enhance education performance in the learners if well utilized. It instills positive attitudes towards education.

Table 4.10 nature of problems encountered when teaching learners with mental disabilities.

The results from the above revealed that 18.52% of the teachers strongly felt that negative attitude is a barrier when teaching learners with mental disabilities. Only 6.48 felt that stationary is the main barrier when teaching mentally retarded learners. Ndaruma (1993) says that negative attitude affect considerably in the academic performance of mentally retarded learners. This calls for sensitization of the parents, learners, teachers, community and stakeholders to have positive attitude to those learners as part of the community.

5.2 Summary/Conclusions

The researcher conducted the study and the following are the impact of the teaching resources on the academic performance of mentally retarded learners.

The researcher revealed that there was negative attitude.

This may be due to communication difficulties in impacting the knowledge to mentally retarded learners.

Lack of enough learning resources leading to giving up and frustration of both learners and teachers thus inadequacy of appropriate approaches to meet the needs of the learners in academic performance.

Teaching learning resources should be concrete to facilitate the learning of these learners. Early intervention is needed and the prerequisite skills taught followed by remediation, individual educational programme for the learners, guiding and counseling to be put in place in schools for encouragement and self- esteem. The units develop a resource room and collect concrete materials for storage and use in the lessons.

Recommendations.

From the study carried out it is clear that learning resources has an impact on academic performance of learners with mental retardation. These learners to perform well academically, the researcher recommended the following measures to be taken.

More teachers to be trained and equip them with skills for handling learners with mental disabilities.

Guiding and counseling of learners, teachers, parents and the society to be put in place to get rid of the negative attitude towards members with mental disabilities.

Teaching and learning resources should be provided so that teachers can use them to enhance the performance of the mentally retarded learners.

The government should keep on buying facilities and resources needed and appeal to donors to support.

The teachers to use multisensory channels for the mentally retarded learners to understand the concept taught during the lesson to enhance academic performance.

The learner should be provided with individual educational programme to cater for individuals needs.

The learners should be exposed to learning resources and concrete materials to handle and enhance academic performance.

The government should be able to enact the parents, teachers association.

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