

CHALLENGES FACING LEARNERS WITH VISUAL IMPAIRMENT
AN INCLUSIVE SETTING IN NAVAKHOLO DIVISION,
KAKAMEGA DISTRICT, - KENYA.

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DECLARATION

I hereby declare that this my own original work and has never been partially or wholly been submitted to any institution of higher learning for the award of a degree or any other award. Any material cited in this book in this work and is not my own, has duly been acknowledged.

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APPROVAL

This research is submitted for examination with my approval as a University supervisor

Signed:

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to be 'Mujuni Evarist', written over a dotted line.

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DEDICATION

A dedication to my dear husband Mr. Festus Wangwe and loving children Bradely, Brighton and Tracy for their support, encouragement, prayer and understanding during my studies and this research write up exercise.

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ABSTRACT

This study was aimed at investigating challenges facing visually impaired learners in an inclusive setting.

To collect required information on the set objectives, the researcher used the survey strategy which employed questionnaires. This instrument was used because it was found to be cheap and could easily reach many respondents in different areas of the study area.

The researcher's target population was all primary teachers in inclusive schools especially those who were in touch with the visually impaired learners.

The data collected from the above respondents was organized using a qualitative method. The study found out that most teachers lacked skills to easily communicate visually impaired learners, most schools lacked materials to use in teaching these children, some teachers still have negative attitude towards disabled and children with visual impairment were highly assumed to be learning at the pace of the sighted or totally ignored academically at the expense the so called normal learners.

To improve on the education the visually impaired learners, it was recommended that children with profoundly low vision should be placed in special schools where they can benefit from the services of specialized teachers, distance education be in special needs at various institutions be emphasized, instructional materials be provided by government, seminars to sensitize teachers and the public by various professionals be intensified and persons with special needs be involved in planning and implementation of special needs education programs.

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

Background

A child according to the constitution of the republic of Kenya (1964) refers to: Any person below eighteen years of age. It has been that girls at this age are always full of potential and eager to develop skills and knowledge through observation and instructions. A visually impaired person on the other hand is an individual who has lost sight either mild or profound due to either genetic or environmental factors. The focus of this study was majorly centered on the education of visually impaired child.

Persons with disabilities including those with visual impairment have existed since the creation of mankind. They have been taken as lesser beings in many aspects of life and mostly in the area of education. Persons with any kind of disability were formerly considered socially and physically less capable before the nineteenth century. They were not easily accepted by some families and communities and were neglected and rejected.

The world community in 1990 at Jomintien, Thailand however pledged to ensure the right to education for all regardless of individual differences and abilities. This world declaration of education for all in article 1:1 states that; “Every child, youth and adult shall be able to benefit”. Following this world declaration, the Kenyan government declared universal primary education, adult education and education for persons with disabilities. The purpose of all these was to eliminate the high rate of illiteracy in the country. The marginalized persons like the visually impaired child were also given opportunity to pursue education to the highest level depending on their ability and capability.

According to the researchers own personal experience in this division which is the area of study, there is a big number of visually challenged children dropping out of schools despite the efforts made by the government and other social organizations to promote the education of disabled children in the country. Negative attitudes towards the disabled still exist and seem to come as a result of stereotypic beliefs such as witchcraft, curses or punishments for wrong doing among others. They were given names such as the crippled, dumb, idiot and moron, deaf and imbecile. These names depict bad social image and lowered their self-esteem.

These negative social feelings could have originated from some teachers who think that the learners with special needs are not worthy handling in an inclusive setting. This too can be seen in the communities whereby they are hidden and denied access to social; services like medical care or assessment for school placement. Also when parents take their children to special schools, they don't come back to pick them on the closing day of the term and the children are left to suffer for some days.

Parents and teachers are no exception from the rest o the entire public. They too have negative attitude towards handicapped learners and deny them the opportunity to learn and benefit from the inclusive setting. Majority of the teachers even advise pare to take their visually impaired children to special schools which are distant and expensive. The researcher's attention therefore has been drawn to carry out an investigation to find out the factors affecting the performance of children with low vision not only in this area but the whole country and world over.

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Statement of the problem

There are many children with visual impairment attending regular/ordinary schools countrywide. Following their poor progress in class, they seem not to be realized. This is due to their low academic achievements especially in the current school era rating system is based on mean score. Teachers seem to ignore these children and pay more attention to ordinary children. It should however be realized these learners can perform better given proper attention and support by the school, parents and community

Generally the performance of learners of learners with visual impairment has not been good compared to their sighted counterparts. This could be due to the emerging challenges in teaching learners with learning disabilities integrated with ordinary peers. Boldly many teachers in inclusive schools still have negative societal attitude that have not greatly changed. They label the disabled children in abusive and dehumanizing manner. It is for this reason that the researcher was prompted to investigate the challenges faced by visually challenged learners in regular schools.

- (i) To find out problems faced by learners with visual impairment in an inclusive setting.
- (ii) To establish possible causes of the challenges facing learners with visual impairment in inclusive schools.
- (iii) To investigate the attitudes of teachers towards teaching learners with visual impairment in an inclusive class.
- (iv) To suggest and find out the views of others on how to overcome challenges faced by visually impaired learners in mainstream schools.

Scope of the study

The study was carried out in three selected primary schools sampled in the area. Since not all teachers in the selected schools teach learners with visual impairment, the researcher targeted specifically those in contact with these children. The study was entirely limited to teaching and learning children with visual impairment under the set objectives.

Significance of the study

The findings of the study will enhance the retention of the visually impaired learners in regular mainstream schools. The findings will also enable teachers to administer appropriate methods in teaching such learners in an inclusive education setting, proper teaching methods, teaching resources of their level adapting curriculum along

Limitations

The researcher encountered the following limitations among others:

- The time scheduled for this study was limited. This time also coincided with the time set by the district for athletics and theatre act competitions. It was therefore hard for the researcher to get teachers and children since they were out for these activities. The researcher was therefore made to visit the schools several times.
- Parents who were respondents expected to be paid back in exchange of their answers. They were therefore rigid in giving their responses.
- The study was too expensive for the researcher in terms of transport, stationery, typing and binding among others.
- It was tiresome for the researcher because he had to carry out the study and at the same time continue with the work programme and teaching practice.

Delimitations

- The knowledge of the respondents' mother language enabled the researcher to collect data with much ease.
- The manageable study sample enabled the researcher to collect data easily with in short time given.
- Costs were lowered because of the distance from the researcher's working place to the sampled schools. There was therefore no need for accommodation expenditure as the researcher gathered information.
- Seeking help from people of good will also enabled the researcher to get such services as typing and binding at a subsidized cost.

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

Introduction

This chapter is going to define who a visually impaired learner is given historical background of the learners types of challenges facing learners with visual impairment, causes of visual impairment, attitude of teachers towards learners' with visual impairment, the possible remedies to the problems facing the visually impaired learners.

Disability is not inability. Disabilities affect people regardless of their age, gender, socio-economic grouping or ethnicity. The disabilities occur either in one of the following stages of life.

- Congenital (before birth),
- Peri-natal (during birth) or,
- Post-natal (after birth)

Disabilities are caused by several phenomenon's ranging from drugs, diseases, pre-mature births, accidents during birth to poor nutrition.

According to Skojoten M.D (1997) concepts of special needs Education, UNISF Kampala a disability is any restriction of the ability to perform an activity in the manner or within the range considered normal for human beings in the cultural context. This lack of ability is caused by damage of the part of the body leading to loss or weakening of the part affected. Learning is a relative permanent change in behaviour which is shown by the way a person thinks acts, feels or behaves. Learning must therefore involve all senses – sense of sight, sense of smell, sense of hearing, sense of taste and sense of touch.

Who is a visually impaired learner?

Visual impairment refers to one who has visual problems even after treatment and or standard correction (S.C) and has a visual acuity (V.A) of less than 6.8 to light perception or visual field (V.F) of less than 10 degrees from the point of fixation. Not all handicapped children are totally blind some are able to perceive. Difference in light and shades and others see images which are so distorted, blurred or fragmented, that it's difficult to extract meaning from a visual world. Visual impairment is one of the common disabilities present in our schools today.

Types of challenges facing learners with visual impairment.

Kimani (2003) quotes one of the challenges as teaching methods. The curriculum is rigid and does not favour the visually impaired learners.

It has not been modified and does not give additional time for teaching the specialized skills such as Braille, reading and writing, mathematical computation, typing orientation, mobility and activities of daily living. The rigid teaching methods do not cater for the needs of the visually impaired learners. Real objects for learners to touch and manipulate are really used.

The curriculum does not plan learning activities with the understanding that the same activities may take longer time for learners with visual problems. Due to this learners feel neglected and rejected. According to Kimani (2003) another challenge is the environmental adaptation. Environmental adaptation or adjustments are very important for learners with visual problems to make them cope with learning in an inclusive setting.

Most of the classes are not arranged in an orderly manner. This hinders safety. The classroom arrangement is also changed without the learners' awareness. This may make learners with visual

impairment disoriented in the environment. Teachers do not place learners with visual problems in a position that suits which becomes a barrier to learning.

Most of the classrooms in this area have very bright light which is a problem to learners who have light sensitivity. This is a challenge to learners and makes them not to learn effectively. Drawings and charts are not drawn in hold type. Most of them are not displayed at learners' eye level. Most of the schools lack large print books for easier reading. All these problems hinder the learners from coping with learning in an inclusive setting.

According to Kiburi (2005) poverty is also a big challenge to these learners lack of finance hinders learners with visual problems from having visual devices which enhance vision. These include spectacles binoculars, highlighters, Braille machines, brailed textbooks, embossed or tactile maps, typewriters.

Due to lack of money, such learners do not go for medical check ups whereby they are supposed to be treated, guided and counseled. They are not taken for assessment for early intervention and in most cases learners' needs are not established. Hence the factors causing visual impairment are not defined, analyzed and strategies for solving the problems are not decided, this makes the learners to have more problems since the child is not assisted.

Kimani (2003) and Kiburi (2005) categorized the challenges affecting learners with low vision. I agree with them. I do so because findings of this study reveal that majority of the learners with visual problems have the same challenges. I support their point of view that such children have high potentials when given enough support and if any these challenges are solved.

This is why the researcher has engaged in researching these challenges so as to find possible solutions.

Causes of Visual Impairment

Kimani (2003) revealed that there are different causes of visual impairments

These include:-

- (i) The anatomical or structural defects of the eye
- (ii) Defects resulting from heredity or genetic
- (iii) Pathologies or diseases
- (iv) Poor nutrition
- (v) Toxin such as poisons, chemicals and drugs
- (vi) Refractive errors
- (vii) Trauma

The defect resulting from the genetic from the genetic or heredity are passed from the parent or grandparents to the offspring. Normally the defect is inborn and it is difficult to be cared. An anatomical or structural defect of the eye is a condition whereby the eye may not develop physically and internally well and may have structural defects. It may have one or more parts missing. Majority of the learners may be seen as normal until they are assessed.

Pathologies or diseases that cause visual problems include cataract, trachoma, glaucoma, exophthalmia or vitamin A deficiency, optic atrophy, retinal diseases. Trachoma, which is caused by an organism called clamidia trachomatic is highly contagious. It is common in dry areas with poor hygiene and inadequate water supply. This eye disease is common in this area since the area is very dry with very little water. Most schools in the zone have cases of learners suffering from

trachoma. They have itchy red eyes, eye discharge, painful eyes, and sensation of foreign bodies and scarring of the conjunctiva which are the signs of the disease. Trachoma in severe cases causes total blindness. Cataract is one cause of eye problems which is the leading cause of blindness causing about 46% of visual impairment in this country. It is not exceptional; some learners in this area have visual due to cataract and if left untreated may cause total blindness. In this case the learner may use Braille as a medium of reading and writing. Lack of intervention may be caused by poor access to medical attention and treatment. When a child has this disease, he/she will not be able to explore his environment and this limits his/her learning.

Xerophthalmia or vitamin A deficiency is common among poor communities where malnutrition is rampant. This disease affects the sciera or conjunctiva. In this case the eye may look dry, sensitivity of light and night blindness. Children suffering from xerophthalmia in a classroom situation may have various eye problems. Such children spend most of their time in hospital for treatment.

Trachoma according to Oyugi (2000) is a sudden injury to the eye of a person especially which may have an effect on the head. A slap on the face may affect the eye. Some specific drugs have side effects that may damage the visual system. Poisonous chemicals also can cause eye problems and may lead to total impairment Oyugi (2000) gives another cause of visual problems as parents ignorant. The mother is the first to notice eye problem of the child. Most of the parents have different taboos and instead of going for medical check up they give their children a traditional herb which in turn poisons the eyes.

Lack of awareness may also be a cause of this challenge which causes fibres of the optic nerve deteriorate gradually and die. The patient is not able to interpret visual images in the brain since

their passage is locked. The eye looks normal but the patient could be blind. Optic, atrophy may be caused by malnutrition, toxins or poisons, infections, tumours or head injuries. These conditions affect learning since the person cannot see clearly. Retinal disease also is a cause of eye problems. This condition results from damage on the macula of the retina.

Loss central vision may affect reading and the ability to see details. I agree with the two authors (Kimani 2003 and Oyugi 2000) in what many people explain as the causes of their visual impairment. Majority of these causes have been found with OVC – learners in an inclusive setting in this area of study which become a major concern to the researcher.

Attitude of Teachers towards Learners with Visual Impairment.

Most of the teachers gave the notion that any child with a disability is of low ability and cannot perform as the normal child. This has an impact to teachers' ignorance of learners with visual impairment. When a child is ignored, is lowered her/his self esteem, confidence and becomes withdrawn in the class.

Regular classes are congested thus teachers do not have time to give the visual impaired child maximum attention. Teachers may abuse children with visual problems and label them. Such names make the learner to feel rejected and neglected in the class, some head teachers do not admit learners with visual problems in their schools because they term them as low achievers and thus they will lower the school mean score.

Most teachers do not motivate these children even if they have shown an improvement in academics. Such children are not also given chance to participate in schools activities because they are seen as incapable. Teachers tease learners with visual impairment and segregate them which may further the handicap.

Sigot (2005) revealed that the speech development of such children may be slower than of those of sighted children for they acquire word with what they see. Teachers do not understand this and instead of giving them extra time when answering questions, they complete answers for them thinking that they are wasting their time since they are after finishing the syllabus. Teachers do not advise the visually challenged learners on how to handle and care for the low vision device. They may not be willing to teach learners on hygiene and diet. This makes their problems worse since the visually impaired should observe hygiene and also eat a diet which contains vitamin A to avoid and control low vision.

Kimani (2003) says that children with such problems should be placed closer to the chalkboard, most of the teachers ignore this and classroom. Teachers may be resistant to get extra time to teach specialized skills to these visually impaired children. Some regular teachers do not reinforce the low vision learners. They do not praise them not motivate them whenever they answer any question. Others think that it is a wastage of time asking them questions of assisting them to read comprehension. This makes such learners lag behind and perform poorly.

Sigoti (2005) and Kimani (2003) have vividly pointed out the altitude of the teachers towards learners with visual impairment. Not all the teachers have negative attitude towards disadvantage learners. Some of them have positive attitude and assist these learners. I concur with two authors that majority of teachers have negative attitudes towards these learners since I have observed such behavior with many teacher who are not willing to help and support the learners. Most of the teachers are after the mean score and to them low vision learners are a bother. The same has been happening at schools under study and this made the researcher to investigate on the teachers attitude towards learners who have visual impairment.

The possible remedies to the problems facing the visually impaired learners.

One intervention strategy of visually impaired learners is training teachers on how to educate and deal with visual impaired learners. Demott (1982) recommended the practice to institute an itinerant teacher visits regular schools to provide tutorial and remedial assistance to the integrated child. This, of course, assumes that when the internet is not around, the child is given the necessary assistance by the school administration and teachers. The assistance should include tape lecture, Braille, and written notes for both the students and the itinerant teacher. The use of low vision devices will also help these learners by enhancing vision. The low vision devices include the optical low vision and non optical low vision devices. Optical low vision devices are lenses placed between the eye and the object to facilitate seeing. They are used for magnification and are not prescribed by the eye specialist. They also enhance vision.

According to Sigot (2005) the total blind children use Braille for reading. This is a system of touch reading which employs the use of embossed dots arranged in cells. By touching the arrangement of the dots, one is able to tell their meaning.

Kariuki (2002) says that visual efficiency training follows visual stimulation programmes. Visual stimulation involves the training of the organs of sight in order to see better. It is done through involving the person with impairment in activities that involve the use of vision. The visual activities involve visual discrimination eye-hand co-ordination, fixation, tracking, scanning, eccentric viewing and low vision movement or mobility.

A person with low vision may have restricted movement or mobility due to the efficiency of vision. The environment has to be modified to eliminate any barriers that are bound to restrict movement. The essential places to be modified are;- Classroom, school compound, toilets and

dormitories. To allow efficiency movement, low vision skills should be taught. This skill includes the sighted guide, Narrow spaces, and cane skills, crossing the road and orientation to chair or table and independent living skills.

Ogonda (2002) says that teachers may make it possible for the learner with visual impairment to be accepted by the other learners by demonstrating positive and supportive attitude to the other teachers about the need of the learner and discuss what they can do together to minimize barriers to learning and development.

The teacher should be kind, tolerate with and support the learner all the time. The teacher should also give extra time. The teacher should also give extra time for tests to compensate for the time they lose in repeatedly trying to find their place and reading direction. Early intervention is essential to learners with visual impairment immediately a child is noticed to be having visual problems; she/he should be taken for assessment whereby visual acuity is tested. This will help one to know the category of vision and the type of device to use. Early intervention will help in the placement of the learner. Guidance and counseling will be important to assist the learner accept his condition.

(Waruguru and Oganda 2002) have given good remedies for the problems facing the visually impaired learners to fit in an inclusive setting since he/she will have minimal problems. Such children can be very useful in the schools through their participation in co-curricular activities for example they can be very good singers and poem recites. It should therefore be everyone's responsibility to help them reach their full potential in life instead of making them feel rejected or even rejecting or even rejecting them. Let us all give helping hand where we can and whenever we are called to.

In summary this chapter has covered who a visually impaired learner is, types of challenges facing learners with visual impairment, the possible remedies to the problems facing learners with visual impairment. The next chapter is on methodology of the research.

CHAPTER THREE

METHODOLOGY

Introduction

This chapter is going to cover research design, sampling procedures, sample population, instruments used for the study and data analysis.

Research Design.

The study used survey strategy to collect information from the sampled population. The strategy used reached many people who responded easily from different areas of the zone. It also employed questionnaires to collect data from different respondents thus enabling the researcher to determine the state of the problem.

Sampling procedures

Being a survey design, the researcher used simple random sampling. The zone has a total population of one hundred and eighty nine teachers. The zone has twenty seven schools. The twenty seven schools were grouped in five clusters. Out of the five clusters, the researcher chose two schools using sample random procedure.

He also used the same procedure to choose two teachers totaling twenty teachers who were not fully represented but the findings benefited all the schools for the particular clusters share the same characteristics since merging of the clusters was regional.

Sample Population

The researcher's target population was all the primary regular teachers in the area. The teachers' population was one hundred and eighty nine. The primary schools in the zone were twenty seven in number. Sample teachers were chosen to represent the zone. The teachers were chosen from all direction within the five existing clusters. Out of hundred and eighty seven teachers, only twenty teachers were chosen. This represented the twenty seven schools in the zone.

Research instruments

During a data collection the researcher used questionnaires to gather information from various corners of the zone. This was because all the respondents chosen were literate and the questionnaires were able to:-

- (i) Cover a large population
- (ii) Be posted to far respondents
- (iii) Save time, money and energy for the researcher did not go round visiting each school in the zone.
- (iv) It did not required identification of respondents hence they cannot give their options and comments. In this case the researchers also used closed questions since the respondents were able to give their own views and opinions.

Data Analysis

The data analysis technique was statically. The data was arranged for easier interpretation in frequency distribution. In these percentages were calculated for each category of answers given. The most frequent answer (mode) was used to report what the respondent feel and think about the visually challenged learner in the inclusive classroom setup.

Review

In this chapter three on methodology, we have covered the research design, sampling procedures for the research and finally data analysis technique used. The next chapter will discuss the research findings.

CHAPTER FOUR

ANALYSIS AND PRESENTATION OF THE FINDINGS

Introduction

In this chapter the researcher is going to provide answers to the research, questions of study in the various sections of the questionnaire.

The purpose of this chapter is to gather and compile information collected by the researcher through table's frequencies and percentages. The questionnaires given to the various sampled respondents were analyzed carefully.

Personal Information

Out of the ten respondents who sent back their fully filled questionnaires eight were females and twelve were males. The teachers were of different ages and different teaching experiences ranging from three years to over twenty years experience. The respondents were sample from both the lower and upper school teachers.

The Types of Problems Facing Learners with Visual Impairment in the area

Table 1 Poor teaching methods and approaches cause problems to visually impaired learners.

Category	Frequency	Percentage
Agree	08	40
Strongly agree	10	50
Disagree	02	10
Strongly Disagree	00	00
Total	20	100

Out of twenty respondents who answered the questionnaire whether poor teaching methods and approaches cause problems to visually impaired learners and agreed, 10 strongly agreed and 2 disagreed, none of the respondents strongly disagreed.

The information table 1 indicates that majority of teachers agreed that the poor teaching methods and approaches cause problems to visually impaired learners while only a few disagree.

Table 2: Poor use of teaching and learning aids cause problems to visually impaired learners.

Category	Frequency	Percentage
Agree	10	50
Strongly Agree	10	50
Disagree	00	00
Strongly Disagree	00	00
Total	20	100

Out of twenty respondents who responded to the questionnaire on whether poor use of teaching and learning aids cause problems on visually impaired learners 10 of them agreed, 10 strongly agreed and none neither disagreed nor strongly disagree.

The information in table 2 indicates that all the teachers agreed that poor use of teaching and learning aids cause problems to visually impaired learners.

Table 3: Absenteeism from school to attend medical care committee to visually impaired learners.

Category	Frequency	Percentage
Yes	14	70
No	06	30
Total	20	100

Out of the twenty respondents who responded to the question regarding the absenteeism from school to attend medical care as a contribution to the visually impaired learner's problems, 14 out of them responded Yes and 6 responded No.

The information in table 3 shows that most of the teachers in the sampled schools agreed that absenteeism from school to medical care contributed problems respondents said No.

Table 4: Lack of specially trained teachers result to problem of visually impaired learners.

Category	Frequency	Percentage
Yes	16	80
No	14	20
Total	20	100

The table shows that out of twenty respondents who answered the question whether ;lack of specially trained teachers result to problems of visually learners 16 of them responded Yes and 4 No. From the table most of the respondents were for the support that lack of specially trained teachers result to visually impaired problems while only a few opposed the opinion.

Possible Causes of Various Problems Facing Learners with Visual Impairment.

Table 5: Childhood diseases for example measles cause visual impairment

Category	Frequency	percentage
Agree	09	45
Strongly Agree	07	35
Disagree	04	20
Strongly Disagree	00	00
Total	20	100

Out of the 20 respondents who responded to the questions if childhood diseases is one of the visually impairment causes of agree, 7 strongly agree, 4 disagreed while none of the respondents strongly disagreed.

The results in Table 5 indicates that majority of respondents supported that childhood diseases cause visual impairment while only a few disagreed.

Table 6: Heredity Causes visual impairment which may affect learners performance

Category	Frequency	Percentage
Agree	07	35
Strongly agree	12	60
Disagree	01	05
Strongly disagree	00	00
Total	20	100

Out of 20 respondents who responded to the question whether heredity is one cause of visual impairment, 7 agreed, 12 strongly agree, 1 disagreed while none strongly disagreed.

The information in table 6 seems to indicate that majority of the teachers supported that heredity is a cause of visual impairment while only one teacher had a negative opinion.

Table 7: Trauma causes visual impairment which becomes a barrier to learning.

Category	Frequency	Percentage
Yes	20	100
No.	00	00
Total	20	100

Out of 20 respondents who answered the question whether trauma causes visual impairment 20 respondents gave a positive reply. None of the respondents said No.

According to table 7 it indicates that all the respondents supported that trauma causes visual impairment.

Table 8: Poor nutrition leads to visual impairment.

Category	Frequency	Percentage
Agree	14	70
Strongly agree	03	15
Disagree	03	15
Strongly disagree	00	00
Total	20	100

Out of 20 respondents who responded to the question that poor nutrition causes visual 14 pointed out agreed, 3 strongly agreed, 3 disagreed and none strongly disagreed.

The information in table 8 indicates that most of the teachers agreed that poor nutrition is one of the causes of visual impairment while a few gave negative responds.

General attitudes of teacher towards learners with Visual Impairment in an Inclusive setting.

Table 9: Labeling visual impairment learners by teachers affect their academic performance in an inclusive setting.

Category	Frequency	Percentage
Yes	19	95
No	01	05
Total	20	100

Out of 20 respondents who responded to the question whether labeling visual impaired learners by teachers affect their academic performance 19 said Yes while one said No.

As per the table almost all the teachers accepted that labeling visual impaired learners contributed to poor performance while only one teacher opposed.

Table 10: Feeling of teachers that visual impaired learners are lesser beings and under achievers lower their self esteem.

Category	Frequency	Percentage
Agree	15	75
Strongly agree	02	10
Disagree	02	10
Strongly disagree	01	05
Total	20	100

From the table out of 20 respondents who responded to the question if, feelings of teachers that visually impaired learners are lesser beings and underachievers 15 agreed, 2 respondents disagreed and only one strongly disagreed.

According to table 10, it is a clear indication that majority of teachers gave a positive answer supporting that visually impaired learners should not be taken as lesser beings and underachievers. Only a few respondents would not agree.

Table 11: Lack of teachers motivation affects the learning of the visually impaired children.

Category	Frequency	Percentage
Agree	08	40
Strongly agree	12	60
Disagree	00	00
Strongly disagree	00	00
Total	20	100

Out of the 20 respondents who answered the question whether lack of teachers motivation affects the visually impaired learners academically, 8 teachers agreed, 12 strongly agree while none of them disagreed.

The information in table 11 indicators that all the teachers agreed that lack of teachers motivation affects the learners with visual impairment.

Table 12: Feelings of regular teachers that visual impaired learners should be taught in special school and by special teachers affect the academic performance of the visually impaired learners.

Category	Frequency	Percentage
Agree	06	30
Strongly agree	10	50
Disagree	04	20
Strongly disagree	00	00
Total	20	100

From the table, the results shows that out of the teachers who answered the question if teachers feelings that visual impaired learners should be taught in special schools and by special teachers, 6 agreed, 10 strongly agreed, 4 disagreed and none strongly disagreed.

Table 12 indicates that majority of the respondents supported that teachers feelings that visually impaired learners should be taught in special schools and by special teachers affect their learning. Only a few disagreed.

Offering teachers courses and enlightening them on how to handle learning with visual impairment can curb the problems facing visual impaired learners.

Table 13: Possible Intervention Learners who are visually impaired.

Category	Frequency	Percentage
Agree	05	25
Strongly agree	15	75
Disagree	0	0
Strongly disagree	0	0
Total	20	100

Out of 20 respondents who responded to the question, on offering teacher's courses and enlightening them on how to handle learners with visual impairment as a remedy to the problem, 5 of the teachers agreed, 15 strongly agreed while none of them disagreed.

The information in table 13 seems to indicate that all the teachers agreed that offering teachers' courses is an intervention strategy to the challenges facing the visually impaired learners.

Table 14: Holding workshops and seminars for regular teachers can help in solving the visually impaired challenges.

Category	Frequency	Percentage
Agree	04	20
Strongly agree	12	60
Disagree	04	20
Strongly disagree	0	0
Total	20	100

Out of the twenty respondents who answered the question on whether holding seminars and workshops is a remedy to the challenges of the visually impaired, 4 agreed, 12 strongly agreed, 4 disagreed and none strongly disagreed.

The information in table 14 shows that most of the teachers agreed that holding seminars and workshops can solve the visually impaired learner's challenges only a few respondents did not agree with the suggestion. As shown by the majority respondents, it is also the researcher's view that seminars and workshops.

Table 15: Orientation and mobility skills can reduce problems faced by visually impaired learners are important in improving teachers' ability and skills in handling these children.

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

From the 20 teachers who responded to the question whether orientation and mobility skills can reduce visually impaired learners problems, 18 of them responded Yes while only two teachers responded No.

According to the indicate that orientation and mobility skills can reduce visually impaired learners problems since majority of the teachers supported and answered positively while only a few gave a negative response.

Table 16: Adjustment and modification of learning environment can reduce problems faced by learners who are visually impaired.

Category	Frequency	Percentage
Agree	06	30
Strongly agree	12	60
Disagree	01	10
Strongly disagree	0	0
Total	20	100

Out of the respondents who responded to the question if modification and adjustment of the learning environment can reduce barriers to visual impaired learners 6 agreed, 12 strongly agreed, 2 disagreed and none strongly disagreed.

This chapter four on finding has covered the types of problems facing learners with visual impairment, possible causes of the various problems, general attitude of teachers towards learners with visual impairment and intervention strategies to the problems facing learners who are visually impaired. The next chapter summarizes the findings, discusses the findings, draws conclusion and makes recommendations from the study.

CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY, DISCUSSION, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION

Introduction

This chapter is going to summarize the findings of the study, discuss, draw conclusion from the results and then make necessary recommendation.

Summary

People with visual impairment have existed since the creation of mankind. These people have been neglected and taken as lesser beings. They were considered socially and physically less capable.

It has been found out that teachers have negative feelings towards these learners. They have a belief that such disability came as a result of witchcraft or punishment from God and this makes them feel that such children should not learn in a regular class. Due to this such learners have faced different challenges in an inclusive setting. This prompted the researcher to investigate the challenges faced by the visually impaired learners in regular schools to promote their enrolment, learning and performance. The objectives of the study would enhance the retention of visually impaired learners in regular mainstream.

The findings also enabled the teachers to give proper methods in handling such learners.

Kimani (2003) categorized the challenges affecting learners with visual impairment. The categorization helped in the proper placement and also the correct visual device to use. Oyugi (2000) also revealed that diseases are a major cause of visual impairment. Lack of proper nutrition has affected the expectant mothers and young babies in the area. This may partly

account for some cases of visual impairment. This made the researcher to find the methodology of solving these challenges in the zone. The data analysis reveals that most of the respondents gave consideration to learners according to their disability. A few numbers did not give any consideration.

Discussion

Table 1: Views of respondents on how to improve teaching methods and approaches to suit the visual impaired learners. One of the findings seen in table 1 is that appropriate teaching methods and approaches should be provided in the integration programmes to enhance learning of the visually impaired learners.

In support of this view Kimani (2003) presupposes the provision of modified curriculum since it is rigid and do not cater for the needs of visual impaired learners. 18 respondents were of this view. Indeed many of these learners have difficulties in following the curriculum. One of the findings seen in table 5 is that diseases that cause visual impairment for example measles should be treated in time. Kimani (2003) reveals that most of the visual impairment is caused by childhood diseases which can be treated and controlled. 16 respondents supported this view. Majority of these learners do not get the proper treatment hence affecting sight. This affects learner's education.

In table 8 one of the findings is that low vision learners should be provided with good hygiene and diet. Majority of the malnourished children have eye problems which affects learning. In support of this view Oyugi (2000) presupposes the use of balanced diet. For visually impaired learners. 17 respondents were of this view. Lack of proper nutrition contributes to learning difficulties in the integrated programmes.

One of the findings seen in table 11 is that learners with low vision should be motivated and praised in an inclusive settings.

In support of this Oyugi quotes that teachers should reinforce the low vision learners to boost their self esteem and enhance learning. 20 respondents were of this view. When visually impaired learners are not motivated they lag behind and perform poorly.

In table 14, one of the findings seen is that, holding workshops and seminars for regular teachers will solve the visually impaired learners challenges.

Waruguru (2002) presupposes for the provision of the seminars and workshops hence teachers will be equipped with new skills and knowledge on how to handle learners with visual impairment in the mainstream.

20 respondents were of this view. This workshops and seminars will change teachers attitudes towards the low vision learners.

According to table 16 the learning environment should be adjusted and modified to cater for the learners who are visually impaired. In support of this view Kariuki (2003) reveals that classrooms, school compound, toilets and dormitories should be modified to eliminate any barriers that are bound to restrict movement. 18 respondents were or this view. It is true that when the environment is not adjusted and modified, the low vision may have restricted movement or mobility due to the efficiency of vision. Apple et al (1980) and Corn (1985) states that residual vision can be improved by using the following instructional approaches.

- (i) A vision stimulating programme.
- (ii) Visual efficiency training
- (iii) Vision utilization instructions.

Vision stimulation programmes, according to Corn (1985, P IV 1) are used primarily with children and individual “who have a minimal amount of vision and / or have not, to any great extent used their vision for visually oriented behaviours or for incidental learning” this stimulation enables the brain area responsible for vision to be activated and register, record and disseminate the visual clues that the child has learnt or mastered.

Visual utilization instruction, according to Corn (1985) involves modifying the environment, using optical and non optical aids, and other techniques to make maximum use of the vision. It is important to maximize the visual abilities of the child for mobility purposes. (Kirk, 1972) reveals another approach for the child to sit close to the chalkboard and also to encourage the child to work on materials which he cannot see clearly.

Conclusion

The researcher completed the study on the investigation of challenges affecting learners with visual impairment in inclusive setting. He came up with various challenges. He concluded that the visually challenged learners face barriers in an inclusive setting.

From table 1 the major learning barrier was the poor teaching methods and approaches which indicated 18 respondents. Who gave a positive response. This indicated that learner’s needs are not catered for since the visually impaired learners lag behind academically.

Recommendations from the respondents were that the appropriate teaching methods and approaches should be provided in the mainstream.

In table 5, 16 respondents supported that diseases as a challenge to the learners commending that learners are not taken for medical checkups and due to this neglect learners are less capable academically.

Recommendations

Recommendations from respondents were that the visually impaired should be taken to hospital for treatment and assessment so that they cope with the rest in class.

Poor nutrition given to visual impaired learners creates problems. From table 8, 17 respondents points out that low vision learners should be provided with good hygiene and diet. The suggested nutrition was balanced diet which contains vitamin A. recommendation from the respondents were that proper diet improves the eyesight of the learners hence minimizing learning barriers.

From table 11, all the respondents suggested that reinforcement and motivation boosts learners self esteem and enhance learning. Recommendations from respondents were that reinforcements creates confidence to learners with visual impairment. It also makes the learners feel accepted in the inclusive education. All the respondents accepted that, holding seminars and workshops for regular teachers equipped them with knowledge and new skills on how to handle visual impaired learners in the mainstream. Failure to have seminars and workshops for regular schools resulted to poor teaching and negative attitude towards low vision learners. This also contributed to neglect and labeling suggested that, holding seminars and workshops was necessary since the less capable learners were placed in the mainstream.

From table 16, adjustment and modification of learning environment was suggested as a way of eliminating barriers that may hinder learning 18 respondents of the sampled teachers suggested

that classrooms, school compounds, toilets and dormitories should be adjusted to cater for the less parents, teachers, pupils and the community as a whole should retrain from labeling them and giving the learners unpleasant and demeaning names.

Through media, the community at large should be educated on the cause and prevention of childhood diseases. Also the ministry of health should hold seminars and educate them on common diseases which affects the eye, how to take care of eye and also they should be given advice on attending eye clinic.

The ministry of education science and technology should adjust and modify the learning environment considering the individual needs of the visual impaired learners. State holders should also assist in modifying the school environment, for example the classroom and toilets.

The government should have a monetary budget towards improving the learners/ education and availing their expensive resources for example, visual devices and large print and books. This acts as a way of considering and recognizing the existence of the children in the nation. The government should also give provision in the employment policy such that may qualified disabled persons are employed. This would motivate those who are still schooling.

Teachers and parents should assist such learners in orientation and mobility training. To allow efficiency movement, low vision skills should be taught. This includes sighted guide & narrow spaces cane skills and independent living skills. This will help the low vision learners hence they will not lose direction.

Also the government should support the service offered to this learners by the teachers. The government should continue providing free and compulsory education which is assisting the learners in attaining the appropriate employment after schooling. This will enhance interaction and self esteem in an inclusive setting.

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APPENDIX 11

QUESTIONNAIRE TO TEACHERS

You are requested to answer the following questions. Your response will lead to compilation and give a comprehensive educational report on effects of learners with visual impairment on academic performance/

Anything given will be treated with confidentiality.

1. Identification of Gender

Male ☐

Female ☐

2. What is the age of respondent?

31 – 50 years ☐

20 – 30 years ☐

7 – 11 years ☐

3. Highest level of education

Degree ☐

Diploma ☐

“A” Level ☐

“O” Level ☐

KJSE Level ☐

CPE Level ☐

Below KCPE ☐

4. Religion ☐

Christian ☐

Muslim ☐

Others ☐

5. Do you know the meaning of learners with visual impairment

Yes ☐ No ☐

6. Have you heard about learners with visual impairment through the media?

Yes ☐ No ☐

7. Poor teaching methods and approaches cause problems to visually impaired learners.

Agree ☐ Strongly agree ☐ Disagree ☐ Strongly disagree ☐

8. Poor use of teaching and learning aids cause problems to visually impaired learners/

Agree ☐ Strongly agree ☐ Disagree ☐ Strongly disagree ☐

9. Absenteeism from school to attend medical care contributes to visually impaired learners problems.

Yes ☐ No ☐

10. Lack of specially trained teachers result to problems of visually impaired learners.

Yes ☐ No ☐

11. Childhood diseases for example measles cause visual impairment.

Agree ☐ Strongly agree ☐ Disagree ☐ Strongly disagree ☐

12. Heredity causes visual impairment which may affect learners performance in academics.

Agree ☐ Strongly agree ☐ Disagree ☐ Strongly disagree ☐

13. Trauma causes visual impairment which becomes a barrier to learning

Yes ☐

No ☐

14. Holding workshops and seminars for regular impaired challenges

Agree ☐

Strongly agree ☐

Disagree ☐

Strongly disagree ☐

15. Orientation and mobility skills can reduce problems faced by visually impaired learners.

Yes ☐

No ☐

16. Adjustment and modification of learning environment can reduce problems faced by

learners who are visually impaired.

Agree ☐

Strongly agree ☐

Disagree ☐

Strongly disagree ☐