

FACTORS AFFECTING ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE OF LEARNERS
WITH SPECIAL NEEDS IN PRIMARY SCHOOLS IN KOLIR SUB-COUNTY
OF BUKEDEA DISTRICT.

BY

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NOVEMBER, 2018

DECLARATION

I, **IKURET ANDREW** declare that this report is my original work and has never been submitted for an award of a degree or diploma in this or any other University

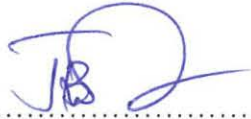

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Signed:

Date: 30th/8/2018

APPROVAL

This report has been submitted for examination with the approval of the University supervisor, **Mr. Barasa .M. John** of the school of open and distance learning, Tororo study centre of Kampala International University.

**SUPERVISOR**

Date: 30/08/2018

DEDICATION

This work is dedicated to my brother **Emong Solomon** who supported me financially, socially, spiritually throughout this course.

To my wife **Ikuret Pricillah Grace** whose love, support and encouragement filled me with determination and general support that saw me complete this course successfully.

I also appreciate my children **Akurut Eunice, Asuko Faith, Kongai Esther** and **Okotel Gabriel** whose love gave me hope and encouragement in this struggle.

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I am grateful to all those who in one way or another helped me to undertake this course.

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I would like to thank the lecturers of Kampala International University, Tororo study centre for taking me through this course.

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I also want to thank my dear wife for her prayers and support offered to me during my study.

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ABSTRACT

The study investigated the factors affecting academic performance of learners with special needs in primary schools of Kolir Sub-County of Bukedea district.

A survey research design was used to achieve these objectives. A questionnaire and interview guide were developed and used to solicit responses from respondents. Frequent counts and percentages were used to determine the factors in the said primary schools.

It was found that:

- 1) There was inadequate funding of special schools and indeed primary schools. A factor that contributed to poor academic performance of learners with special needs.
- 2) The government and parents should intensify the feeding programme at schools to help not only to improve performance but also retain the learners at school.
- 3) Emphasis be put on inclusive education to help reduce stigma on the learners with special needs.

It was therefore concluded that:

- 1) Funding of education of learners with special needs be given the attention that it deserves.
- 2) It is imperative that learners with special needs be fed while at school.
- 3) Inclusive education be given emphasis.

On the basis of the above conclusions, it was recommended that:

- 1) There is need for government to increase financial assistance to schools of learners with special needs and provide not only adequate teachers but also other facilities and amenities to help them contribute to the national economy.
- 2) There is need to sensitise the parents to provide lunch for the children while at school as this would help them not only to concentrate on their studies but also to stay in school.
- 3) There is need for more primary schools to be brought on board to offer inclusive education as this would help reduce the stigma of the learner with special needs.

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CHAPTER ONE

Introduction

1.1 Background.

Kolir sub-county is one of the sub-counties that makeup Bukedea district. Bukedea district is one of those districts that constitute the greater Teso sub-region. It is to be found east of Mbale district. The inhabitants here are peasant farmers who eek a living out of peasant farming and livestock rearing, however this area has for sometime been devastated by environmental degradation due to chronic poverty. It is no wonder therefore that Teso region which used to be a food basket for Uganda is no more. Despite this, the district leadership of Bukedea is doing what it takes to bring back the lost glory of the district and Teso region as a whole. Among the intervention that is being carried out include primary, secondary and tertiary education. This is because education is a human right and is seen as a vital instrument for achieving the goals of equity, development and peace.

That is why the constitution of Uganda stipulates that education is a fundamental right for every citizen consequently the government of Uganda has committed itself to providing quality and relevant education to all its citizens irrespective of gender, cultural, regional or social differences UNEB (2008).

The constitution therefore, presupposes that people with all types of disabilities PWDS or pecial needs learners have been taken care of. It is true that a policy to this effect was enacted but the field has not been level. Daily Monitor (Thursday, February 8, 2018) reported that pecial needs students continue to face challenges with the way Uganda National Examination board (UNEB) sets examinations and grades results which affects their performance.

is with this in mind that the researcher sought to establish the factors affecting academic rformance of learners of special needs in Kolir sub-county of Bukedea district. It is true that e presence or absence of certain factors may affect the performance of especially special eds learners hence the research.

1.2 Statement of the Problem.

According to 1991 population and housing census, about 190,000 were persons with abilities. These include persons with visual, audio, mental and physical impairments. Additionally such persons have been marginalized and in addition little effort has been made

to provide special facilities in education which have adversely affected their academic performance.

1.3 Purpose:

The purpose of the study was to investigate the factors affecting academic performance of special needs learners in primary schools of Kolir sub-county of Bukedea district.

1.4 Objectives:

1. To establish the factors that affect academic performance of learners with special needs in primary schools of Kolir sub-county of Bukedea district.
2. To investigate the effects of these factors on academic performance of learners with special needs in primary schools of Kolir sub-county of Bukedea district.
3. To evaluate the measures being taken to improve academic performance of learners with special needs in primary schools of Kolir sub-county of Bukedea district.

1.5 Research Questions.

1. What are the major factors that affect academic performance of learners with special needs in primary schools of Kolir sub-county of Bukedea district?
2. What are the effects of these factors on the academic performance of learners with special needs in primary schools of Kolir sub-county of Bukedea district?
3. What are the measures being taken to improve academic performance of learners with special needs in primary schools of Kolir sub-county of Bukedea district?

1.6 Scope:

1. Geographical scope:

The study was carried out in primary schools of Kolir sub-county of Bukedea district.

2. Time scope:

The study was carried out between the months of January and October, 2018.

1.7 Significance:

1. The study would enable schools to work with stakeholders to improve academic performance of learners with special needs.
2. The study would enable the government to budget and put the necessary infrastructure in primary schools to enable learners with special needs to improve their academic performance.

3. The study would sensitise the government and the ministry of education and sports to put in place mechanisms of training teachers for learners with special needs.
4. The study would be an addition to the stock of existing knowledge.

CHAPTER TWO

REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE.

2.0 Introduction

This chapter reviewed the related literature.

2.1 Factors that affect academic performance of learners with special needs.

Special needs learners are those with severe disabilities or other individual learning needs who have the intellectual capacity to meet all the curriculum and assessment needs and who require special arrangements to demonstrate their level of achievement. UNEB (2017).

Therefore, learners with special needs include persons with visual, audio, mental and physical impairment. GOU (1995) However, New Vision (Wednesday December 19, 2012) highlighted the fact that learners with various disabilities have faced problems such as lack of trained teachers and indeed schools for them are few or non-existent forcing many of them to perform poorly. They are also stigmatized by the public.

Disaster too, is a factor that significantly affects the academic performance of learners with special needs. Daily Monitor (Wednesday, June 27th, 2018) reported that Bukedea district had received relief items from the office of the prime minister under relief and disaster docket for water logged areas. According to the letter from the OPM, it is only affected residents, children, HIV/AIDS patients who will be considered first.

Despite this, Daily Nation (Tuesday, Decembers 20, 2005) observed that schools or institutions for the disabled pupils lacked school committees, boards of governors and parent teachers associations to oversee their operations and consequently the institution were prone to mismanagement. Indeed schools that are mismanaged cannot yield performance. Whether it is the case with the learners of special needs in primary schools of Kolir sub-county of Bukedea district is yet to be established.

In addition the same paper went on to report that institutions for the disabled had no functioning time tables and this situation had been compounded by insensitive heads who lacked proper training in managing the said institutions and consequently the teachers found it extremely difficult to teach hence poor performance. This was the case with special schools in Nyanza province of Kenya, the paper concluded.

Therefore, Saturday Vision (June 30, 2018) observed that according to a report by UNICEF in 2014, child disability prevalence is 2.5 million with these facing a number

of challenges which include stigmatization, misconceptions about disability, lack of effective participation and inferiority complex among others. Disability means having a mental or physical health problem that restricts the ability to engage in activities of daily living. This can be caused by genetic, environmental or unknown factors.

It is crucial to note that while the government policy of Universal primary education clearly spells out the role of each stakeholder, research shows that poor supervision and parental apathy are the biggest drawback to the delivery of quality education especially up country. Most districts do not adequately facilitate the schools inspectors to do their job. This is the main cause of teachers absenteeism. Most up country parents have also reneged on their roles to provide scholastic materials and lunch for their children, yet research shows a strong correlation between parental interest and involvement in education and their children's achievement levels. Whether this scenario is obtaining in primary schools with learners with needs in Kolir sub-county of Bukedea district is yet to be determined. New Vision (Thursday January 24, 2013).-----

In conclusion the paper noted that infrastructural development by government per se cannot improve academic performance.

However, Saturday vision (June 30 2018) reported that the persons with disability Act (2006) stipulates that not less 10% of all educational expenditure should be allocated to the needs of persons with disability. According to the national development plan (NDP) 10% of children in school have special needs and their access to special needs is hampered by limited technical, human, financial and physical public resources. In the same light UNEB (2017) observed that special needs learners are those with severe disabilities or other individual learning needs who have the intellectual capacity to meet all the curriculum and assessment needs and who require special arrangement to demonstrate the level of achievement. In this category are the blind who do not have the sight and use Braille. Then the low vision have partial sight that do not enable him or her to read ordinary print with ease. The deaf are those who do not hear and or have no speech and usually require the service of a sign language interpreter. The other category is that of hard hearing and those are persons who are partially deaf and may or may not require the service of a sign language interpreter. The dyslexics are the learners with inherited conditions that make it extremely difficult for them to read, write and spell. The physical impaired is a learner with severe physical impairment that may not enable him to cope with learning. Finally the mental impaired is a learner who has an I.Q

below 75. These are person's referred to as persons with sub normal intelligence. The types of disability enumerated above are in themselves a factor or factors that affect academic performance of the above persons.

An analysis of education attainment of persons with special needs was done by examining the different educational categories as shown in the table below.

Proportional Distribution of Educational Attainment of Persons with Disabilities.

Educational attainment	Women	Men	Both sex
None	73	49	61
Primary	25	44	35
Secondary +	2	7	4
Total	100	100	100

Source: MGCD women and men in Uganda 1998

The data above show that over 70% of the women with special needs had not attained any educational level whereas the proportion of men in this category was about 50%. For those who had attained the level of secondary and above, only 2% of the women were recorded while the men with special needs recorded 7%. The reason to those findings may be difficult to ascertain, but one of the probable reasons could be that of parents' preference to educate boys than girls. The overall picture of attaining education for persons with special needs is still bleak, MGCD women and men in Uganda (1998).

In yet another issue of Daily Monitor (Friday, June 29, 2018) it was reported that 60% fail accountant's exams which was attributed to absenteeism and inadequate preparations of the learners. Indeed New Vision (Friday march 23, 2018) observed that there are many factors that cause poor performance of pupils one of them is the poor working conditions of teachers, stretching from accommodation to poor pay which is in most cases overdue. This disheartens them. Teachers are too, overwhelmed by the big numbers and are unable to monitor the pupils individually. Some parents do not encourage their children at home and they leave everything to the teachers. There is also limited up to date reading materials which make it hard for the pupils to have a healthy competition. Then hunger and long distances especially in village schools.

However, in the issue of Daily Monitor (Thursday February 8, 2018) an observation was made that UNEB was grading special needs students like the rest and this did greatly affect their performance. In addition to the above, New Vision (Tuesday, October 27, 2009) highlighted the fact that persons with disabilities (PWDS) constitute approximately three million of Uganda's population and that disability means persons with impairment and attitudinal and environmental barriers that hinder full and effective participation in society on equal basis with others. Whether this is the case with learning needs in primary schools of Kolir sub-county of Bukedea district is yet to be established. Saturday Monitor (Jan 30, 2016) observed that the student poor performance in sciences was due to teachers not teaching practicals but also that there were few science teachers in schools.

2.2 Effects of the Varied Factors on Learners with Special Needs.

A number of factors have effects on the academic performance of learners with special needs. Daily Monitor (February 8, 2018) highlighted the fact that in (UCE) examinations of 2017, the grades of special needs students had been affected by the way mathematics and entrepreneurship examinations were set. The paper further reported that blind students got a problem attempting some mathematics questions because there is no Braille for mathematics. The Braille they learn in primary is only for word making and it is difficult to interpret mathematical symbols. For instance the blind cannot draw pie charts or construct angles. In entrepreneurship, there was a paper that required someone to write ledgers, draw tables and post figures which blind students cannot do by nature of their disability. However New Vision (Wednesday, January 12, 2013) observed that many disabled children are kept behind closed doors yet they can make it in life. There are one million disabled children in the country. The world health organisation estimates that the figures of people with disabilities could be double and perhaps even rise to 10%.

Therefore, Daily Monitor (Monday April 16, 2018) observed that many parents with special needs learners are economically incapacitated besides most of the institutions sometimes lack did not have sign language instructors that is why the researcher decided to investigate the factors affecting academic performance of learners with special needs in primary schools of Kolir sub-county of Bukedea district.

In a related incident, Daily Nation (Tuesday December 20, 2005) noted that heads of special schools in Nyanza province of Kenya were diverting donor funds to personal use. In addition gross irregularities and massive corruption were ills that were threatening the education of the disabled children. However, poor remuneration of teachers in both government and private

schools has led to the high rate at which teachers are leaving the profession. New Vision (Wednesday, January 2, 2013). In the same paper, Victoria Sekitoleko, a former agriculture minister noted that because teachers are poorly paid, many opt to transact private businesses while giving little attention to class work, hence the poor performance of schools. New vision (Thursday, January 24, 2013) observed that in a country where the assessment system emphasis academics rather than practical skills and other attribute, attaining good grades becomes the major objective of many school administrators at the expense of holistic education.

But that as it may be, New Vision (Wednesday January 23, 2013) highlighted the fact that the then vice- chancellor of Makerere university professor Dumba Ssentamu said staff shortage had bogged down the university standards and affected the quality of graduates. This is yet to be determined among the learners with special needs in primary schools of Kolir sub-county of Bukedea district. A university is worth its name if it has professors and an adequate number of academic staff so are other academic institutions. On the other hand, high pupil numbers were blamed for decline in academic performance. Daily Nation (Monday January 20, 2014).

Therefore, New Vision (Tuesday June 26,2018) observed that away from the social disadvantages, special schools especially public ones are few, far apart and often poorly facilitated. It gets rather expensive to set up and run special schools a long side main stream schools. Indeed the same paper noted that when we talk about education for children with disabilities, our minds race towards “special schools”. We think that education for children with disabilities must take place in a school for the deaf or the blind or the physically handicapped, away from children without disabilities. It is important to note too, that Daily Monitor (Monday, April 16, 2018) reported that Mr. Stephen Tusiime, the principal of Uganda college of commerce kabale, said their teaching timetable had reduced from the usual 17 weeks students should be in school per semester to 11 weeks making it difficult for them to complete the syllabus. The same paper noted that many deaf people fail to attain a successful career due to neglect and stigmatization from community but for Sam Oyugi Abero,³¹ that stigma served to make him stronger and today he is a teacher at Mother Tereza Nursery and primary school in Gulu. He teaches primary five and six and he says he loves mathematics lessons more. He says the deaf children are good at mathematics than any other subject. Whether this scenario is obtaining in Kolis sub-county of Bukedea district is yet to be determined. The Observer (Monday January 7-8, 2013) observed that there were challenges

in imparting quality education. There was shortage of teachers and service delivery is poor. In addition, New Vision (Wednesday, December 30, 2009) reported that the human rights report by the foundation for human rights initiative (FITRI) was launched and that the report specifically focused on the abuse of the rights of persons with disabilities (PWDS) in Uganda. It noted that although the government has excelled in laying down disability friendly policy framework through the person's with disability act 2006, the breadth and implementation of these policies remain defective. The act provides guidelines in terms of the rights of the (PWDS) in relation to subjects like access to education wealth and employment services.

Traditionally people with disabilities have been marginalized and denied the opportunity to participate fully in the social and economic development of the country. In addition, little effort has been made to provide special facilities in education, architectural designs, transportation and work environment to minimise the adverse effect of these disabilities GOU (1995). Whether this is the case with learners with special needs in primary schools of Kolir sub-county of Bukedea district is yet to be established.

However, Saturday Monitor (June 23, 2018) stated that the unity and equitable development of Uganda depends on a number of factors. However, the most paramount among them is providing an inclusive and quality education to all children regardless of geographical location and economic status of the family. Inadequate feeding or indeed for some students and pupils, the complete lack of what to eat while at school has been identified as one of the leading contributors of poor learning outcomes. Whether this is the case of learners with special needs in Kolir sub-county of Bukedea district is yet to be determined.

2.3 Measures Being Taken To Improve Academic Performance of Learners with Special Needs.

Daily monitor (Thursday February 8, 2018) observed that UNEB secretary Daniel Odongo said that they had made adequate arrangement for special needs students to sit their examinations. He added that some questions were modified, provided questions written in Braille form, provided special personnel for handicapped and dyslexics and sign language interpreters for the deaf and all special needs students were allowed an extra 45 minutes. However, New Vision (Tuesday October, 27, 2009) highlighted the fact that the current law on disability needs to be overhauled because there some provisions which do not provide people with disability with legal recourse. This should provide the opportunity to enact a new

one which would reflect the UN convention on the rights of persons with disabilities. The convention covers, in a more comprehensive way, the rights of persons with disabilities. This would, too go a long way in assisting learners with special needs. Suffice it to note that Florence Kabasoni a teacher from Kyegegwa district gave birth to a child who was diagnosed with deafness. This condition impedes speech and social and intellectual development of the child. Under this circumstance, the teacher was forced to learn sign language so that she could teach her daughter. Whether this is the situation with academic performance of special needs learners in Kolir sub-county of Bukedea district is yet to be determined. Consequently a unit for the deaf at her school was constructed and Kabasoni helped to run it. Plans are underway to transform the unit into a full-fledged primary school. This resolve by Kabasoni helped to reduce stigma which children with disabilities suffered.

Indeed the Observer (Monday January 7-8, 2013) reported that Luuka district was to build teachers houses. Lack of teachers' house has been costing the district in terms of academic performance. None of the schools had teacher's houses and the teachers move on foot daily to schools leading to absenteeism. There is also unresolved cold war between teachers and the government over teachers remuneration. The (NPOA) national plan of action demanded that the government recruit more teachers and improve their remuneration.

As if that is not enough, parents vowed to monitor and arrest absentee teachers. This was reached at in Buyende district. The parents attributed poor academic performance to teachers' absenteeism.

In yet another edition of New Vision (Tuesday June 26, 2018) it highlighted the fact that for a long time children with disabilities are better off in inclusive as opposed to special schools". For a long time children with disabilities have been educated in sparate classes or sparate schools and people got used to the idea that special education mean't separate education. But we now know that when children are educated together, post academic and social outcomes occur for all the children involved.

Inclusive education is based on the simple idea that all children belong. All children are equal and deserve the same opportunities and experiences. Inclusive education is about children with disabilities- whether the disability is milder or severe, hidden or obvious, participating in everyday activities just as they would if their disability were present. It is about building relationships.

However, the New Vision (Tuesday, September 29, 2009) reported that the government plans a massive reform of the secondary education curriculum in an attempt to make the education system more relevant. The new reforms will include changing the student's national examination system, reducing further the number of subject rewriting the learning materials and lowering of age at which students choose careers.

In an effort to improve the academic performance of learners with special needs, the (UNISE) Uganda national institute of special education was established in 1998 as a department in the institute for teachers education, kyambogo and later it become an autonomous organization by act of parliament in 1998. The major aim of its set up was to equip trained teachers with skills in special education. This covers training in handling children with hearing impairment, visual impairment, mental retardation and also community based rehabilitations. GOU (2000).

However, GOU (1995), the government of Uganda took upon itself to provide persons with disabilities with appropriate facilities, amenities and skills to enhance their contribution to the national economy. Whether this is happening to learners with special needs in Kolir sub-county of Bukedea district is yet to be established. In addition the government was to train community based personnel to meet the special needs of persons with disabilities. Therefore at the current population growth rate of 2.5 percent per annum, Uganda's population is expected to double in 28 years. In this respect the country needs to expand substantially its entire infrastructure, particularly in education, health, employment, water supply, and housing in order to enhance the welfare of its growing population. New Vision (Wednesday, December 19, 2012) observed that parents in Kyegegwa district take their deaf children to school willingly.

It is also vital to note that despite government's effort to provide free education for all, a lot still needs to be done so as to achieve quality and inclusive education. A comprehensive approach to resolve the crisis of feeding school children that takes income and resource of the families into consideration is likely to yield better results. By providing lunch to school children, we remove hunger as a barrier to learning. An active feeding programme encourages pupils to attend school and keep them energetic and more focused throughout the day, Saturday Monitor (June 23, 2018). Therefore, there is a growing concern in Uganda of the need to focus priority on society most disadvantages groups like women, youth, children and persons with disabilities in developing planning process.

CHAPTER THREE

METHODOLOGY

3.0 Introduction

The chapter presents the methodology of the study.

3.1 Research Design

Survey research design was used in the collection of data for the study. This was so because of the fairly big number of the population and it would also save on the time of the researcher. The researcher employed random sampling technique since the population had similar characteristics.

3.2 Population

The population comprises fifteen primary schools. They were all inclusive primary schools. Out of these, six were sampled representing over 50% of the population

3.3 Sample

Random sampling technique was used to get the sample for the study. This was because of the similarities in the population. Six out of fifteen were sampled representing 50% of the population. Three girls, three boys making a total of six pupils, three teachers both male and female and a district official making a total of four. In total, those who took part in the study were ten respondents, representing 10% of the population.

3.4 Instruments of the Study.

Questionnaires were mainly used in addition to the interview guide and documents. This is because questionnaires were easy to construct and it was also convenient to interview the respondents. Questionnaires were also easy to administer and quantify the responses that would help the researcher to draw viable conclusions. Questionnaire were meant to solicit for information from the teachers and pupils and the interview guide was to be applied to be district official.

3.5 Procedure

The questionnaires were pre-tested and the question there found to be valid and reliable. The researcher sought an introduction letter from the university and proceeded to administer the said questionnaires himself and interview the respondents.

3.6 Data Analysis

Frequent counts were used in obtaining the data which was then tabulated and percentages determined. The results from the interview were to support the data from the questionnaire and this enabled the researcher to draw conclusions.

CHAPTER FOUR

ANALYSIS AND PRESENTATION OF RESULTS

4.0 Introduction

This chapter analyses and presents the results.

4.1 Table one show the category of respondents that took part in the study.

Category	Female	Male	Frequency	Percentage
Pupils	3	3	6	37.5%
Teachers	3	3	6	37.5%
Officers	2	2	4	25.0%
Total	8	8	14	100.0%

The table shows the different respondents that took part in the study. The pupils comprised (03) girls and (03) boys drawn from upper primary that brought the percentage to 37.5%. Teachers were represented by (03) males and (03) females. This was equivalent to 37.5% on the hand, the education officials were (02) females and another (02) males bringing the percentage to 25%. The table shows that gender balance was exercised.

4.2 Table two shows the major factors that affect academic performance of learners with special needs.

Responses	Frequency	Percentage
1	8	50%
2	8	50%
3	6	38%
4	5	31%
5	5	31%

The table shows that (8) respondents representing 50% of the population said that funding of education for the disabled or special needs learners had greatly affected their academic performance. 10% of the national budget is supposed to go towards funding activities of the disabled persons among which is education, however, of late only 10% of the budget is what is given to them. This is pittance. therefore, (08) other respondents representing 50% of the

population observed that there were few schools for learners with special needs which too, did affect their academic performance but even the few were not well equipped in terms of teachers and teaching aids. (06) respondents representing 38% of the population noted with dismay that teachers who headed schools for learners with special needs had no basic training in leadership and lacked hand on skills to propel such schools to better heights academically. In addition poor supervision of schools contributed a lot to not only absenteeism of teachers but also poor academic performance. (05) Respondents representing 31% of the population was in agreement.

However, another (05) respondents representing 31% of the population asserted that stigmatization of learners with special needs had demoralised them as far as academic performance was concerned. Indeed factors affecting academic performance of learners with special needs were:

1. Funding
2. Few schools for learners with special needs
3. Headteachers with little or no skills in management of schools.
4. Poor supervision
5. Stigmatization

Teachers and heads of schools interviewed decried the poor or inadequate funding of the units for special needs learners something; they said should be done to increase the funding which should also be timely.

4.3 Table three shows the effects of the varied factors on the academic performance of learners with special needs.

Reponses	Frequency	Percentage
1	12	75%
2	10	62.5%
3	11	68.75%
4	09	56.25%
5	08	50%

The table shows that (12) respondents representing 75% of the population said that corruption was derailing the academic performance of learners with special needs. It is common

knowledge that corruption has taken centre stage in every facet of life and has impacted on every activity. However, (10) respondents representing 62.5% of the population asserted that the presence of only a few special schools had, too, affected the academic performance of special needs learners. Even the few such schools are not well equipped to the extent that even the teachers are either few or not there at all. It is also important to note that (11) respondents representing 68.75% of the population observed that poor pay for teachers had orchestrated a situation where the teachers were leaving the profession in thousands hence affecting service delivery in schools. This scenario was coupled with stigmatization a especially with regard to special learners, infact in all schools. (9) Respondents representing 56.25% were in agreement. This situation was made worse by the fact that parents of the learners with special needs were economically incapacitated. (8) Respondents representing 50% of the population said so. The effects were found to be;

1. Corruption
2. Presence of fewer special schools
3. Poor pay for teachers
4. Stigmatization
5. Economically incapacitated parents.

The teachers interviewed were in agreement but emphasise that

Teacher's welfare needed urgent attention, however they also noted that the learners with special needs were stigmatized by society and made them not to exert themselves.

4.4 The table shows measures being taken to improve academic performance of learners with special needs.

Responses	Frequency	Percentage
1	14	87.5%
2	12	75%
3	10	62.5%
4	10	62.5%
5	09	56.25%

The table shows that (14) respondents representing 87.5% agreed that the introduction of inclusive education would help improve academic performance of learners with special

needs. This is because the rest of the school community would learn to appreciate them. Indeed the establishment of (UNISE) Uganda national institute of special education was a milestone in the improvement of the academic performance of learners with special needs albeit their recognition as per the constitution of this country. (12) Respondents representing 75% of the population said so.

Therefore government promised to provide amenities and facilities to the learners with special needs so that they can become production members of this society and fight poverty. (10) Respondents representing 62.5% of the population were in agreement. In addition, the provision of amenities and facilities to them would also arm them to fight off stigma. (10) Respondents representing 62.5% of the population asserted.

Feeding of the school pupils is still an integral part of the school programmes. The ministry of education and sports is now sensitising parents on this noble aspect of parenting. No performance will be realised without provision of lunch to the pupils no matter whether they are special needs learners or otherwise. (09) Respondents representing 56.25% observed.

The study came up with the following measures:

1. Introduction of inclusive education.
2. Establishment of UNISE
3. Provision of amenities and facilities
4. Reduction of stigma
5. Feeding of the learners.

The teachers interviewed said that inclusive education was the way to go and lauded government for establishing UNISE, however, they emphasised that government should provide amenities and facilities to enable the learners with special needs to realize their dreams.

CHAPTER FIVE

DISCUSSION, CONCLUSIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.0 Introduction

The chapter presents the discussion, conclusions and recommendations.

5.1 Discussions:

The study investigated the factors affecting the academic performance of learners with special needs in primary schools in Kolir sub-county of Bukedea district. To facilitate the study, the following research questions were formulated.

- 1) What are the major factors that affect academic performance of learners with special needs in primary schools of Kolir sub-county of Bukedea district?
- 2) What are the effects of these factors on the academic performance of learners with special needs in primary schools in Kolir sub-county of Bukedea district?
- 3) What are the measures being taken to improve academic performance of learners with special needs in primary schools in Kolir sub-county of Bukedea district?

5.2 Research Question One.

Research question one states that;

What are the major factors that affect academic performance of learners with special needs in primary schools in Kolir sub-county of Bukedea district?

When this question was tested, it enlisted varied responses. (8) Respondents representing 50% of the population said that funding of education for special needs learners had greatly affected their academic performance. This has been a bone of contention between the government and people with disabilities. 1% funding instead of 10% of the national budget is inadequate. This assertion is in support of Saturday vision (June 30, 2018) which observed that the persons with disability act stipulates that not less than 10% of all educational expenditure should be allocated to the needs of persons with disability. According to the national development plan (NDP) 10% of children in school have specific needs and their access to special needs is hampered by technical, human, financial and physical public resources.

However, another (8) respondents representing 50% of the population agreed that there were few schools for learners with special needs but even the few were not well equipped in terms of teachers, adequate infrastructure and teaching aids. This view is in support of New Vision

(Tuesday June 26, 2018) which stipulated that special schools especial public ones are few, far apart and often poorly facilitated.

Despite that (6) respondents representing 38% o the population were in agreement that teachers who headed schools for learners with special needs had no basic training in leadership and this had in essence led to maladministration of the said institutions and contributed to poor academic performance of the learners. Therefore, (5) respondents representing 31% of the population asserted that poor supervision of schools contributed a lot not only to teachers absenteeism but also poor academic performance. A number of teachers were demoralised due to poor pay and working condition. This view is in support of Saturday Vision (June 30, 2018) which highlighted the fact that most districts up country do not adequate facilitate the school inspectors to do their work.

Yet another (5) respondents representing 31% of the population observed that stigmatization of the learners with special needs had demoralised them as far as academic performance was concerned. This view is in support of New Vision (Wednesday december19, 2012) which reported that learners with various disabilities have faced problems such as lack of trained teachers and indeed schools for them are few and they are also stigmatized by the public.

5.3 Research Questions Two.

What are the effects of these factors on the academic performance of learners with special needs in primary schools of Kolis sub-county of Bukedea district?

When this question was tested, it attracted many responses. (12) Respondents representing 75% of the population agreed that corruption was derailing the academic performance of learners with special needs. It is true the above vice has eaten into every fabric of society and affected the delivery of many social services. this view is in support of Daily Nation (Tuesday December 20, 2005) which noted that heads of special schools in Nyanza province of Kenya were diverting donor funds to personal use. In addition gross irregularities and massive corruption were ills that were threatening the education of the disabled children.

That is why (10) respondents representing 62.5% of the population said that the presence of few special schools had affected the academic performance of learners with special needs. This is because the said schools were a distance apart and most of the parents were poor. This assertion is in support of New Vision (January 12, 2013) which highlighted the fact that many disabled children are kept behind closed doors yet can make it in life.

Therefore (11) respondents representing 68.75% of the population said that poor pay for teachers had brought about a situation where the teachers were leaving the profession in droves hence affecting service delivery. This view is in support of New Vision (Wednesday January 2, 2013) which reported that teachers are poorly paid. Many opt to transact private businesses while giving little attention to class work hence the poor performance of schools.

However, (09) respondents of representing 56.25% agreed that stigmatization of learners with special needs was so entrenched in the public domain that, too, affected the academic performance of this category of learners. Therefore this view was in support of Daily Monitor (Monday, April 16 2018) which observed that many deaf people fail to attain a successful career due to neglect and stigmatization from the community. Indeed (08) respondents representing 50% of the population said that the economic situation with quite the majority of parents was unfavorable. They were unable to pay fees and even feed their children. This observation is in support of Daily Monitor (Monday April 16, 2018) which said that many parents of learners with special needs are economically incapacitated.

5.4 Research Question Three.

What are the measures being taken to improve academic performance of learners with special needs in primary schools of Kolir sub-county of Bukedea district? When this question was tested, it brought forth many responses. (14) Respondents representing 87.5% of the population agreed that the introduction of inclusive education would go a long way in improving the performance of learners with special needs and would also lessen the stigmatization that they have suffered from. This view is in support of New Vision (Tuesday June 26, 2018) which noted that for a long time children with disabilities are better off in inclusive as opposed to special schools.

However, (12) respondents representing 75% of the population asserted that the establishment of (UNISE) Uganda national institute of special education was a milestone in the improvement of the academic performance of learners with special needs. This observation is in support of New Vision (Tuesday September 29 2009) which reported that in an effort to improve the academic performance of learners with special needs, UNISE, Uganda national institute of special education was established in 1998 as a department in the institute of teacher education in the institute of teacher education kyambogo and later it became an autonomous organisation by an act of parliament in 1998. The major aim of its establishment was to equip trained teachers with skills in special education.

That is why (10) respondents representing 62.5% of the population said that the government promised to provide amenities and facilities to learners with special needs so that they can become productive members of society and help fight off poverty. It is true that one of the weapons for fighting poverty is education. This view is in support of GOU (1995) which observed that government of Uganda took upon itself to provide persons with disabilities with appropriate facilities and skills to enhance their contribution to the national economy.

Indeed another (10) respondents representing 62.5% of the population agreed that with the provision of amenities and facilities to the learners with special needs, this would also help them fight off stigma. This observation is in support of New Vision (Tuesday June 26 2018) which highlighted the fact that all children are equal and deserved the same opportunities and experiences.

Inclusive education is about children with disabilities, whether the disability is mild or severe, hidden or obvious, participating in everyday activities just as they would if their disability were not present. It is all about building relationships.

It is important, too, that learners be fed if performance of any kind is to come by. Learners that are not fed while at school tend to drop out and is one of the reasons for the high dropout rate of learners. (09) Respondent representing 56.25% of the population said so. This view is in support of Saturday Monitor (June 23, 2018) which reported that by providing daily lunch to school children, we remove hunger as a barrier to learning. An active feeding programme encourages pupils to attend school and keeps them energetic and more focused throughout the day.

5.5 Conclusions:

- 1) Funding of education of learners with special needs should be given the attention that it deserves. From the findings of this study, provision of adequate trained teachers and the necessary and vital facilities to learners of this caliber will spur their academic performance.
- 2) It is imperative that learners be fed while a school. The parents and government should intensify the feeding programme. From the finding of this study, children who are fed tend to perform better and to remain longer in school whether they are learners with special needs or not.
- 3) Inclusive education is the way to go. This therefore calls for government to provide trained teachers to such schools and to expand the facilities of the same. From the

findings of this study inclusive education builds relationship as a way of fighting stigma.

5.6 On the basis of the findings of this study. It is proper to make the following recommendations:

- 1) There is need for government to increase financial assistance to schools of learners with special needs and provide not only adequate trained teachers but also other facilities and amenities to help them contribute to the national economy.
- 2) There is need to sensitise the parents to provide lunch for their children while at schools as this would help them not only to concentrate on their studies but also to stay in school.
- 3) There is need for more primary schools to be brought on board to offer inclusive education as this would help reduce the stigma of learners with special needs

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APPENDIX A

QUESTIONNAIRE TO INVESTIGATE THE FACTORS THAT AFFECT ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE OF LEARNERS WITH SPECIAL NEEDS IN PRIMARY SCHOOLS IN KOLIR SUB-COUNTY OF BUKEDEA DISTRICT.

Introduction.

Dear respondents, I am **Ikuret Andrew**, a student of Kampala International University, carrying out a study on the factors that affect academic performance among learners with special needs in primary schools in Kolir sub-county of Bukedea district.

You are kindly requested to fill this questionnaire as earnestly and frankly as possible. The information provided shall be treated with confidence and shall be used for the purpose of this study.

Thank you for your co-operation.

BIO- DATA

- 1. Title
- 2. Gender
- 3. Age
- 4. Experience

TICK WHICHEVER IS APPLICABLE

FACTORS THAT AFFECT ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE.

5. Funding affects academic performance of learners with special needs.

YES

NO

6. There are few special schools

YES

NO

7. Special schools are not managed well

YES

NO

8. Supervision of schools is lacking

YES

NO

9. Learners with special needs are stigmatized.

YES

NO

10. List other factors that affect academic performance of learners with special needs.

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17. Establishment of UNISE is an advantage to the learners.

☐☐

18. Provision of amenities and facilities to the learners will enable them perform.

☐☐

19. Reduction of stigma will help improve performance.

☐☐

20. Feeding of the learners is important

☐☐

21. What measures are being taken to improve the performance of learners with special needs?

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Thank you for your cooperation in filling this questionnaire.

APPENDIX B

BIO- DATA

1. Title
2. Gender
3. Age
4. Experience
5. What in your view are the factors that affect academic performance of learners with special needs?
6. What are the effects of these factors on performance of learners with special needs?
7. What measures do you think government is putting in place to improve performance of the said learners?
8. Do you have anything else you think would be beneficial to this study?

Thank you for your co-operation