

**CHALLENGES AFFECTING THE ACADEMIC ACHIEVEMENTS  
OF LEARNERS WITH SPECIAL NEEDS: A CASE STUDY  
OF GALBET ZONE, GARISSA DISTRICT,  
NORTH EASTERN PROVINCE,  
KENYA.**

**BY:  
SULEIMAN A. HUSSEIN  
BED/13711/61/DF**



**A RESEARCH REPORT SUBMITTED TO THE INSTITUTE OF OPEN AND  
DISTANCE LEARNING IN PARTIAL REQUIREMENT  
FOR AN AWARD OF A BACHELORS DEGREE OF  
EDUCATION IN SPECIAL NEEDS OF  
KAMPALA INTERNATIONAL  
UNIVERSITY.**

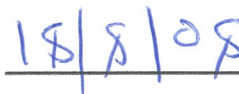
**APRIL 2008.**

## DECLARATION

I hereby do declare that this work is a result of my own effort and has never been submitted for any award in any university or institution of higher learning whatsoever.

Sign  \_\_\_\_\_

**SULEIMAN A. HUSSEIN**

Date:  \_\_\_\_\_

## APPROVAL

This work has been done under my supervision as a University Supervisor, and submitted with my approval.

Sign OKETCH

**OKETCH CHRISOSTOM**

Date: 20<sup>th</sup>. 08. 08

## DEDICATION

This entire work is dedicated to my wife Totti Bare and my children; Anwar, Najma, Muiki, Abderahman, Deka and Hafsa who have always been together with me in all my struggles to reach this far in academic circles. .

I also dedicate it to my parents, brothers and sisters whose prayers opened for me the way as well as giving me spiritual favours and blessings.

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

Utmost appreciation goes to the Almighty God who has enabled me to reach this far in the field of academia.

Am greatly indebted to my supervisor Mr. Oketch Chrisostom who laboured at all times to offer advice in all corners and at all costs to see to it that I do accomplish this research study.

I owe with great concern and love appreciation to the courage, assurance coupled with prayers that I got from my family members especially my wife and children who worked tirelessly to make me complete this course.

My gratitude is further due to my parents, brothers, sisters and friends; Halima, Warab, Abdikader, Abdullahi, Luli, Kuresho and Brother Ibrahim, who cannot be forgotten at this point in time.

Finally, I owe sincere appreciation to the staff of IODL (Institute of Open and Distance Learning) for their advice, care and support that saw us through with our course.

## **LIST OF ACRONYMS**

<b>SLDs</b>	SPECIAL LEARNING DIFFICULTIES
<b>EARS</b>	EDUCATION ASSESSMENT RESOURCE SERVICES
<b>KISE</b>	KENYA INSTITUTE OF SPECIAL NEEDS EDIUCATION

## ABSTRACT

The study attempted to carry out a critical analysis on the challenges that affect the education achievements of learners with special needs while trying to get themselves acclimatized with the regular school programmes where they are mixed with their counterparts who do not have any disability at all. The study took Galbet zone, Garissa District as a case study. Previous studies indicate that a number of challenges do affect and make it hard for these learners to stay at school so as to satisfy their need to attain basic education.

The researcher applied a purely quantitative research design in presenting and interpreting the research findings. The technique of data collection used was mainly the use of questionnaires forms that were addressed to the teachers in Jaribu primary school where the research was conducted. Selection of the samples was based on a simple Random sampling procedure so as to give all the respondents equal chances of participating in the study.

Research findings revealed that the challenges that these learners face in regular schools come from the relationship that exist between them and their teachers, peers, and the general community as a whole and not forgetting the inadequate supply of learning aids from the ministry of education.

The researcher has tried to come up with a number of measures to help improve the learning needs as well as environments that learners with special needs do go through. These include among others: the need for the government to dedicate efforts towards providing enough educational resources, the need to train more teachers in handling learners with special needs, the need for the community to dedicate efforts towards supporting learners with special needs among other recommendations.

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

DECLARATION.....	i
APPROVAL.....	ii
DEDICATION.....	iii
ACKNOWLEDGEMENT.....	iv
LIST OF ACRNOYMS.....	v
ABSTRACT.....	vi
TABLE OF CONTENTS.....	vii
LIST OF TABLES.....	ix
<b>CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION.....</b>	<b>1</b>
1.1 Background to the study.....	1
1.2 Statement of the problem.....	3
1.3 Theory.....	4
1.4 Research Objectives .....	7
1.5 Specific Objectives.....	7
1.6 Research Questions.....	8
1.7 Significance of the Study.....	8
1.8 Scope of the study.....	10
<b>CHAPTER TWO: LITERATURE REVIEW.....</b>	<b>11</b>
2.1. Review of existing Literature.....	11
2.2. Categories of learners with physical handicaps.....	11
2.3. Challenges faced by learners with physical handicaps.....	13
2.4 Alternative measures .....	17
<b>CHAPTER THREE: RESEARCH METHODOLOGY.....</b>	<b>20</b>
3.0. Introduction.....	20
3.1. Research design.....	20
3.2. Area and population of the study .....	20
3.3 Sample Selection.....	21
3.4. Data Collection Instruments.....	21
3.5. Questionnaire Forms.....	21
3.6. Observation Method .....	21
3.7. Secondary Data .....	22
3.7. Data Analysis.....	22
3.8. Encountered Limitations to the Study.....	22



<b>CHAPTER FOUR:</b>	<b>24</b>
<b>DATA PRESENTATION, ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION</b>	<b>24</b>
4.0 Introduction	24
4.1 Profile of the Respondents	24
4.1.1 Age of the Respondents	25
4.1.2 Gender of the Respondents	25
4.1.3 Marital Status of the Respondents	26
4.1.4 Educational Level of the Respondents	26
4.1.5 Working experience of the respondents	26
4.2 Suitability of the current curriculum	27
4.3 Attitude of the various players	28
4.4 Will of the school administration to offer support	29
4.5 Role of the community	30
4.6 Availability of educational resources	31
<b>CHAPTER FIVE:</b>	<b>32</b>
<b>DISCUSSIONS, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS</b>	<b>32</b>
5.0 Introduction	32
5.1 Summary	32
5.2 Conclusion	34
5.3 Recommendations	34
5.4 Areas for further Research	36
<b>REFERENCES</b>	<b>37</b>
<b>APPENDICES</b>	<b>39</b>
Appendix i: Questionnaire forms	39
Appendix iii: Introductory Letter from the university	42

## LIST OF TABLES

Table 4.1: Profile of respondents.....	24
Table 2: The Education Curriculum used to learners with special needs.....	27
Table 3: Attitudes of teachers, pupils and teachers.....	28
Table 4: School Administration and its support to learners with special needs.....	29
Table 5: Community role in helping learners with special need.....	30
Table 6: Availability of education resources to learners with special needs.....	31

## CHAPTER ONE

### INTRODUCTION

#### 1.1 Background of the study

Special learning difficulties refers to conditions affecting learner's abilities to acquire specific skills such as reading , writing ,spelling or solving mathematical problems as manifested in such academic subjects. Some learners may do well in some school subjects but experience difficulties in one or more areas in a given subject. These categories of learners are usually misunderstood, neglected or ignored by teachers in an inclusive setting. Many people have in the past thought that learners with special needs are the blind, the mentally challenged or those with visible physical handicaps.

They however, miss out the point for there are many other forms of difficulties. Specific learning difficulties happen to be one of those conditions. The umbrella term specific learning difficulties are used to cover a wide range of difficulties. Many people worldwide use S.L.D synonymously with dyslexia (difficulty with words), but it is now accepted that dyslexia is only one group of difficulties such as dysgraphia (writing difficulty) dyspraxia (motor difficulties) dyscalculia (performing mathematical calculations), attention deficit disorder or attention deficit hyperactive disorder which is concentrations difficulties with heightened activity levels and impulsiveness aspengers syndrome and autism, which is an emotional behaviour or even social communication difficulties. According to research carried out by lecturers at the Open University UK (2006) each of the above named group of difficulties contributes to S.L.Ds (Special learning difficulties).

In Galbet zone, and its surrounding primary schools, teachers face many problems when teaching these children in an inclusive setting. Curriculum developers from Kenya Institute of Special Needs Education (KISE) a department of the ministry of education, recognize that for a long time, Kenya, has failed to prepare a curriculum that is catering for the needs of all special needs children. A curriculum that could benefit and address all children regardless of their disability is necessary. Teachers have for a long time missed this useful curriculum. An attitude inhibited by pupil's who are disabled poses a lot of problems before their teachers.

Some pupils always hold a view that think that everybody else in the school hates them. This attitude negatively affects them and as a result, those pupils who inhibit a negative attitude will be too difficult for the teachers to teach them and this is a big problem to them. Some parents also have negative attitude and believe that their children have disabilities as a result of witchcraft. They therefore do not take their education seriously and quite often discourage them from going to school.

The community has also failed to get involved in the affairs of the school and believes it is only the school that should be concerned with the education of learners with special needs. They believe that these children should only be handled and taught by the school since the teachers are trained on how to handle them. However, this leaves the teachers in a helpless situation since they cannot handle these learners all the time due to a lot of demand from them seeking for assistance in various ways.

The other problem that teachers face when teaching learners with special needs is directly from the school administration. Most Head teachers and their school management committees view the presence of special needs teachers as a threat to the school administration. Any suggestion that these teachers put forward towards learning and general welfare of these children is shut down.

Some learners with special needs such as those with physical handicaps require expensive wheelchairs that some of which should be motorized. The parents, the school and even the government in most cases fail to provide for these expensive items. The visually impaired learners also require expensive Braille machines which they rarely get other than a few from donors-a situation that pose a big problem to teachers in handling their learning difficulties in the absence of specific learning aids.

The research was therefore interested in carrying out an investigation on the very subject so as to dig out the views and opinion of teachers as regards the setbacks and challenges that they do face while teaching and interacting with these learners.

## **1.2 Statement of the problem**

Learners with special needs do require a lot of care and management from all concerned parties at their homes, in the neighbourhoods, in schools, with their fellow peers as well as the large community where they interface with different social and economic environments.

In Galbet zone however, there is a general tendency to leave learners with special needs in the hands of teachers alone. Such a tendency leaves the teachers with a lot of work to do so as to improve the social welfare of such learners with specific learning difficulties and yet their needs and concern especially from an academic point of view would be adequately answered if all the concerned stakeholders would commit themselves to doing their part basing on their abilities, capabilities and including the resources at their disposal to implement their responsibilities and obligations.

The researcher therefore was interested in digging out the problems that the teachers in this zone undergo so as to put forward a number of recommendation to the various stakeholders right from parents, communities, their peer groups and other factors associated with their schooling environments. These are in position of helping with the developing of a coordinated effort capable of responding to the needs of special needs learners while at the same time relieving the entire burden which is now being shifted to only and only the teachers alone.

### **1.3 Theory**

The study was based on Russell's theory which states that "together is better" specific tips on how to include learners with various "types of disabilities" believes and states that early childhood teachers who include and handle children with special needs in classrooms can set the environment that accommodates these children. The teachers who handle these learners are however faced with many problems.

The problem that teachers face is usually based on their own attitude and compounded by their colleagues. The teachers need to develop a professional relationship with the learner's parents and the physicians and in some cases their other care takers. Teachers should keep an effective communication channel with all the stakeholders in an open environment. The teachers influence according to this theory should lead them to getting more information about the child's education needs, health condition, and nutritional needs. The theory emphasizes that such tasks to a teacher who holds a negative attitude cannot be realized in a school environment.

The ministry of education in any country is charged with the responsibility of providing educational resources for all children in an inclusive setting. In many developing countries like Kenya, this is not the case. As a result, teachers handling learners with special needs undergo many difficulties. The absence of such provisions poses great challenges to the teachers who have no audio, visual or manipulative resources for all children with specific learning difficulties that could facilitate their participation in class while learning the different skills and talents. This therefore shows that teachers are not capacitated to work with learners with special needs due the lack of adequate resources.

Working with children with exceptional learning needs require a curriculum that is capable of meeting all the needs of these children. In most cases the curriculum, provided does not measure to the needs of these children and the teacher faces a problem of trying to make several adjustments to the existing curriculum to meet their needs.

Community involvement poses a great challenge to the teachers handling special needs learners. According to this theory, the education of learners with special needs require children's parents, physicians, care takers to be in regular contact with such learners including their teachers as well as other learners in general. They all ought to get informed about these children's needs like medicine and education. In most cases however, it is only the special needs teachers who are left to handle their needs. Once most parents and the general community are sure the child is in school, they leave the teachers alone to cope up with the problem of teaching such children.

The school administration together with the teachers should provide intervention strategies aimed at assisting the teacher deliver quality services of teaching children with special needs. In most cases, the administration should consult with parents, specialists who can assist such children and even solicit for funds and materials to assist the children so as to ease the problems faced by teachers in handling these challenges.

The school administration should also encourage teachers and always be alert and sensitive to the problems faced by teachers. Ironically, most school administrators abandon the teachers and leave them to look for their own ways of handling such learners.

Russell provides some useful insights to the teachers handling special needs education. She recommends for one to be a good listener, be able to establish parallel talk with children and broadcast play-by-play action of the children's activities especially for



children with communication problems as such an activity helps to stimulate the acquisition of language. In such situations, teachers can also use alternative language such as sign language, or augmentative communication when using teaching aids.

#### **1.4 Research Objectives**

The general objective of this study was to establish the challenges and difficulties that teachers undergo while helping learners with special needs to realize their potential as far as the aspect or variable of education is concerned.

#### **1.5 Specific Objectives**

This research study was guided by the following specific objectives;

- Determining the profile of the respondents in terms of:

Age

Gender

Marital status

Education level

Number of years teaching learners with special needs.

- Establishing the problems faced by teachers in terms of:

Curriculum

Attitudes

School administration

Community involvement

Educational resources

## **1.6 Research Questions**

This study was guided by the following set questions;

- What is the profile of the respondents in terms of:
  - Age?
  - Gender?
  - Marital status?
  - Education level?
  - Number of years while teaching learners with special needs?
  
- What are the problems faced by teachers who teach learners with special needs in terms of:
  - Curriculum?
  - Attitudes?
  - School administration?
  - Community involvement?
  - Educational resources?

## **1.7 Significance of the Study**

This research study findings are in position of benefiting the following disciplines:

The ministry of education will be able to develop and design a curriculum for all categories of learners and in particular those with specific learning difficulties. This will be moved forward based on the finding of the study plus the researcher's recommendations.

The district supervisors will be able to use the end results of the study to sensitize teachers in all schools to handle learners as per their different needs and disabilities. This can be done through organization of seminars and workshops conducted through Educational Assessment and Resource Services (EARS) which is a department dealing specifically with all forms of disabilities in Kenya.

The findings of the study are capable of helping teachers to adjust and modify teaching methods that are accommodative to all forms of disabilities. Schools such as Hyuga primary school, Tetu primary school, and Garissa primary school among others where the researcher will conduct the research will acquire a lot of skills and knowledge about learners with special learning difficulties and pass on the information to other stakeholders who are key to the general well being of learners with specific learning difficulties.

Research findings equip the parents with a lot of knowledge. They will come to understand that children with special learning difficulties are useful in many ways and thus, it is up to them to equip them with those skills and talents that are critical to the development of their full potential.

To the learners, they are put in a mood of acquiring and developing a strong self-esteem of themselves in school, class and in the society at large. Those with special learning difficulties in particular will even encourage others with similar problems on realizing they are excelling in many other areas. Indeed all learners/children with specific learning

difficulties have a lot in terms of benefits as teachers will take into consideration their plight in syllabus modification in content and delivery.

Also, the findings of the study stimulates interest in the other researchers who will be devoted to understanding the different dynamics operating within the learning environment of learners with specific disabilities. All these efforts shall be helpful in aiding the education and the general needs, interests and positions of such learners being addressed adequately.

### **1.8 Scope of the study**

The study was carried out in Galbet zone located in Garissa District taking Jaribu primary school as a case study. This area has been chosen because the researcher hails and works in Jaribu primary school-thus, aware of the fact that the teachers who handle learners with physical handicaps do face a number of challenges while interacting and instructing them. This in turn affect the academic needs of such learners a situation that prompted the researcher to take a critical study of this phenomena.



## **CHAPTER TWO**

### **LITERATURE REVIEW**

#### **2.1 Review of Existing Literature**

The definition of learners with physical handicaps has for a long time been an imprecise affair with different terms such as the crippled, the physically disabled, the physically handicapped, the orthopaedically impaired and the neurologically impaired and so on.

According to Kennedy (1990), physically handicapped children are those with physical, neurological and chronic health impairments. He adds that they have problems performing one or more motor activities due to muscular-skeletal disorders, neurological and/or chronic health impairments. The motor activities affected may be include movement, writing, and speed. In general, these are the children who require aids, wheel chairs, prosthesis, helmets, book readers, page turners, writing aids, rest equipment, special tables and desks.

The researcher supports this definition because from the education point of view, it delineates the areas that prevent children from performing adequately in one or more motor activities such as walking, writing, sitting, turning, posture among others to such an extent that they are unable to handle educational materials.

#### **2.2 Categories of Learners with Physical Handicaps**

It is difficult to study learners with physical handicaps as a homogeneous group. Such an approach would add to fuzziness of trying to describe these children.

According to Ndurumo (1993), learners with physical handicaps can be classified into three major groups: the orthopaedically impaired, the neurologically impaired and the health impaired.

### **Orthopaedic difficulties**

Learners with orthopaedic difficulties have motor impairments resulting from problems related to the bones and muscle systems. Muscles and bones act in a coordinated way to effect the movements of body parts. Examples of learners with orthopaedic difficulties are children with amputations, brittle, bone disease, muscular dystrophy, club foot and poliomyelitis, congenital dislocation of the hips, scoliosis (curvature of the spine), leg calves, perthes and leprosy.

### **Neurological Disabilities**

Learners with neurological disabilities have difficulties in performing activities coordinated by the brain and the nervous system. Ndurumo (1993) stresses that the disabilities are brought about by conditions like cerebral palsy, spine bifida, spinal cord injury, muscular dystrophy and childhood muscular dystrophy.

### **Health Disabilities**

Health disability means limited strength, vitality or alertness due to chronic or acute health problems such as heart conditions, tuberculosis, rheumatic fever, nephritis, asthma, sickle cell anaemia, haemophilia, epilepsy, lead poisoning, leukemia, or diabetes, which adversely affects a child's educational performance.

## **2.3 Challenges faced by learners with physical Handicaps**

### **Motor functioning**

According to Ndurumo (1993), gross and fine motor abilities may be greatly impaired, thereby limiting not only movement of the arms and the legs, but also their functional use such as walking, jumping, writing, holding eating utensils among others. Partial or complete paralysis of the affected body parts reduces sensation and causes contractures and stiffness to develop.

Motor functioning skills are particularly delayed in cerebral palsy children. Denhoff (1976) found out that although normal children achieve head up from prone at 12 months old, all subsequent milestones are attained much later by children with cerebral palsy than by normal children.

### **Communication**

Some learners with physical handicaps experience communication difficulties particularly those who are cerebral palsied. Bleck (1995) stated that speech and disabilities are prevalent with cerebral palsied children while Lencione (1976) observed that these children have problems with muscles related to the control and production of speech and sounds. They often practice laboured speech, and sometimes, produce speech that is difficult to comprehend.

Bigge and Sirvis (1978) observed that cerebral palsied children experience great difficulties in expressing their ideas to others. They state that these children have a lot they would express to others, but due to unintelligent speech, they get frustrated in social situations.

### **Psychosocial Development**

Learners with physical handicaps face challenges as far as their psychosocial development is concerned especially in the way they react to their situation/condition. Since it is hard to generalize their reactions because of the heterogeneous nature of their handicapping condition, the challenges faced here can be summarized by the observations made by Jourard (1958) who stipulated that any of the following reactions may occur;

- ❖ Denial or refusal to acknowledge that the disability exists or that it imposes any limitations whatsoever.
- ❖ Resignation or giving up seeing the situation as hopeless and refusing to help oneself or to be helped
- ❖ Regarding oneself as a victim of injustice perpetuated by others, and punishing the others by hostility or withdrawal.
- ❖ Showing arrogance or rebellion, rejecting help or empathy, making aggressive demands and remaining aloof.
- ❖ Viewing the disability as a punishment for real or imagined infraction of family or social rules.



- ❖ Becoming dependent and demanding because remaining helpless seems the only way to assure attention, affection, and care.

### **Additional Handicaps**

According to Ndurumo (1993), some children have one or more additional handicaps. These handicaps put more additional stress on how learners with physical handicaps cope in society or at school. The handicaps include visual problems, hearing problems, learning disabilities and mental retardation.

### **Negative attitudes**

It is our attitude that makes us believe that learners with physical handicaps cannot learn comfortably in a regular school setting. Learners with disabilities are easily associated with special schools (Randiki, 2002). The researcher concurs with this idea since most learners with physical disabilities are taken to special schools. Randiki further states that cultural practices and attitudes cannot be changed without offering alternatives and suggestions and that, the most viable alternative is to return these learners to regular schools and support them from there so as to enable them succeed.

The future of the physically handicapped children depends on the actions of the aroused and dedicated citizens. The only question will be who to offer hopes and encouragement in their darkest hour and who will be regarded as a stranger.

Negative attitude of the public towards people with disabilities have an effect on rehabilitation and adjustments. The researcher concurs with this idea since children with physical handicaps shy off from class activities like walking to the learning centre when they are laughed at by their peers. Ropy (1997) states that these stereotyped attitudes are perpetuated in part by the media portrayals. He suggests that continued and regular contact is necessary in order for public attitudes towards persons with disabilities to change in a significant way, (Roener 1961 as cited by Ropy 1997).

Teachers often compare the performance of learners with physical handicaps with that of their peers and describe them as not serious, inconsistent and so on. Persons dealing with physically handicapped learners need support to develop positive attitudes. The researcher agrees that this is true because it has been seen that derogative terms used by teachers on these pupils discourage them from achieving their best as they are demoralized (Oganda and Njuki 2000).

In some cases, the general teachers do not feel that it is part of their duty to look after those disabled children. They add that even some general teachers feel that they are not being paid for those children and as a result of which, the resource teachers do not get cooperation from general teachers. Damodar (1995) says that even in some cases, the general teachers do not have any faith relating to the future of these learners.

In some of the cases learners with physical handicaps are not being accepted by their non disabled counterparts in integrated education schools. The researcher sees this as a challenge because free interaction of the two groups will make those with disabilities learn from copying those without disabilities, (Damodar, 1995).

#### **2.4 Alternative measures**

True change can come only from the volition of the people concerned and involved. The researcher sees this as true since change of attitude involves an individual and so teachers, children, parents, and the general community can develop positive attitudes from personal feelings, (watchtower August, 2000).

Positive attitude towards different collaboration and participation are prerequisites for inclusion (Okot and Kutosi, 2001). They further state that positive attitudes may be promoted during interaction between all children i.e. during the process of inclusion. The researcher concurs with the idea since teachers and children can develop positive attitude after interacting with people with disabilities.

Shrive (1964) elaborates that with changing attitude towards the physically handicapped and the growth of teacher-training, a National Association of Teachers for the Handicapped be evolved.

The problem is that teachers are inadequately prepared by college education. Recent studies have found that majority of regular classroom teachers feel that they are not prepared to address individual differences in learning abilities within classroom settings (Freiberg, 1999). He further cites that special educators themselves do not possess sufficient content of knowledge to address the language and reading needs of the children with physical handicaps. Teachers have a tendency of referring children for special assistance because they are ill equipped to provide the necessary services.

Defense against backwardness and retardation is likely to succeed upon a basis of constructive mental health work applied to the education of all children supplemented by some remedial work where this process is necessary (Wall, 1975). He further suggests that teachers can play a key part in constructive work by having sensitive knowledge of their pupils, by close cooperation with parents, by adoption of methods of differing capabilities and above all, by the quality of human relationships they build up with their pupils.

The researcher greatly concurs with the above idea because it is in agreement with the elements of inclusive education which will help children achieve their maximum potential in all their natural environments.

Parents counseling is one of the components of mainstreaming. Children spend most of their time with parents. So, the parents should be trained to the effect that they will be able to facilitate the learning of the physically handicapped children at home in absence

of special teachers as this assist their children in learning daily living skills. The researcher concurs with this idea too since some parents have very low attitude towards their children with physical handicaps. They therefore need to be advised to help their children attain their maximum potential, (Damodar 1995).

Damodar further gives a solution as concerns acceptance of learners with physical handicaps by the non-disabled. He suggests that provisions should be made for providing opportunities to disabled through participation in different curricular activities. To strengthen the relationship between the non-disabled and the disabled children, child to child (peer tutoring) help method should be followed. The non-disabled should be inspired to invite the disabled to different family functions.

---

## **CHAPTER THREE**

### **RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**

#### **3.0 Introduction**

This chapter dealt with data collection techniques and procedures, study area, research design, sample size and methods of data analysis and presentation. The focus of the research was based on people's views, opinions and beliefs held about integration of learners with hearing impairment in regular schools.

#### **3.1 Research Design**

The study employed the descriptive survey method to determine and establish the problems faced by teachers teaching learners with special needs in Galbet zone, Garissa District, North Eastern Province, Kenya.

#### **3.2 Area and Population of the Study**

The study was carried out in Galbet zone located in Garissa District taking Jaribu primary school as a case study. This area was chosen because the researcher hails and works in Jaribu primary school-thus, aware of the fact that the teachers who handle learners with physical handicaps do face a number of challenges while interacting and instructing them. This in turn affect the academic needs of such learners a situation that actually prompted the researcher to take a critical study of this phenomena.

### **3.3 Sample Selection**

The study population consisted mainly of school teachers and the general public. There was one set of questionnaires specifically designed for the teachers who teach the physically handicapped learners in regular school settings.

A total of twenty (30) teachers shall be given questionnaires to fill within a range of two weeks so as to give them ample time to respond to the needed information adequately.

### **3.4 Research Instruments**

To secure information that was needed to answer the set research question as well as the general problem under study, the researcher used a number of methods in collecting the data from the teachers who were the most critical respondents in this research finding.

These included among others;

### **3.5 Questionnaire Forms**

This was applied/used to collect views and data that was represented quantitatively. A total of fifty (30) teachers were given questionnaire forms to fill in within a period of two weeks in order to ~~that~~ <sup>that</sup> adequate time is given for maximum response.

### **3.6 Observation Method**

This was mainly employed to enable the researcher to critically see the difficulties and challenges that teachers do undergo while enabling learners with special needs to acquire their basic skills and knowledge capable of becoming useful human beings in future given the fact that “disability is not inability”. Checking on the relationship that exists

between both the teachers, the learners with specific learning difficulties, the researcher not out a number of challenges and this was too helpful towards enabling the research draw conclusions and recommendations.

### **3.7. Secondary Data**

Documentary sources were made use of and these were obtained from Kampala International University main library, KISE main library, Kenyatta University main library, Internet, Journals Magazines, Newspapers and other periodicals. This shall gave a general background of the challenges that do affect teachers while teaching these learners with special needs disabilities.

### **3.8. Data Analysis**

The researcher using questionnaire forms to the teachers as the key informants as well as the respondents to the study compiled data that is purely quantitative basing on the content of the survey.

Data findings were coded and edited and later summarized in tables with the use of frequencies and percentages.

### **3.9. Encountered Limitations to the Study**

- ❖ The most limiting factor to this research study was the inadequate fund and limited time in which to conduct the research.



- ❖ The respondents expected to be paid for their time spent when being interviewed and filling in the questionnaires and thus, some respondents deliberately refused to deliver the information relevant to the study.
- ❖ The research was indeed time consuming and very tiresome since it required making and connecting lots of movement from place to place to obtain relevant information to the research investigation.

## CHAPTER FOUR

### DATA PRESENTATION AND ANALYSIS

#### 4.0 Introduction

In this chapter, the researcher presents the findings of the study following the study objectives as well as the set research questions.

#### 4.1 Profile of respondents

**Table 4.1: Profile of the respondents**

Category	Frequency	Percentage (%)
<b>AGE</b>		
36-40+	10	33.3
30-35	10	33.3
25-29	5	16.6
20-24	5	16.6
<b>Total</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>100</b>
<b>GENDER</b>		
Male	19	63.3
Female	11	36.6
<b>Total</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>100</b>
<b>MARITAL STATUS</b>		
Single	5	16.6
Married	25	83.3
Divorced	None	0
Widowed	None	0
<b>Total</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>100</b>
<b>EDUCATIONAL QUALIFICATION</b>		
Masters	None	0
Bachelor	5	16.6
Diploma	12	40
certificate	13	43.3
<b>Total</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>100</b>
<b>YEARS OF SERVICE</b>		
1-4	6	20
5-8	14	46.6
9-12	10	33.3
<b>Total</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>100</b>

Source: Primary Data

Table 4.1 above gives a generalization about the profile of respondents who participated in the study. These include the following:

#### **4.1.1 Age**

The findings of the study revealed out that respondents who participated in the study divided themselves into two as far as their age distribution was concerned. Accordingly, respondents in the age bracket of 20-24 and those in 25-29 had similar percentages of 16.6%. Similarly, those within the age bracket of 30-35 and 36-40+ constituted 33.3% each. Thus, the age distribution of the respondents shows that there are no much variations in their age distribution.

#### **4.1.2 Gender of the Respondents**

According to the research findings as illustrated in table 4.1 above, female respondents/teachers who participated in the study constituted 36.6% of the total respondents. Likewise, the male respondents constituted the biggest percentage of 63.3% of the entire respondents who participated in the study.

Though there were some big differences between the percentages of both the female and male workers, it is quite common to find such a phenomenon in most organizations whereby the male workers tend to dominate over the female workers.

#### **4.1.3 Marital status of the respondents**

Study findings revealed that the respondents to the study were either single or married spouses having different activities and responsibilities of both teaching as well as taking other responsibilities outside school settings. Thus, there were neither widowers nor divorced respondents in the study. 16.6% of the respondents were singles who were both men and women not yet married. 83.3% of the respondents were married spouses in the teaching profession.

#### **4.1.4 Education level of the Respondents**

Study findings revealed out that the respondents who participated in the study had diverse academic qualifications in the different fields as far as education/teaching is concerned. 43.3% of the teachers had certificates in teaching as compared to 40% who had attained diploma level qualification. Research findings revealed that respondents who had Bachelors degrees were 16.6% of the total percentage of respondents who participated in the study. An addition, it was discovered that no respondent had the academic qualification of masters degree.

#### **4.1.5 Working Experience of the Respondents**

According to study findings as indicated in table 4.1 above, 20% of the respondents have a working experience of 1-4 years. These according to the research findings were the respondents whose marital status was singles. 46.6% of the respondents had a working experience of close to 5-8 years and these according to the research findings were the respondents who were in the age bracket of 30-35 years of age. In addition, 33.3% of the

respondents constituted those with a working experience of about 9-12 years in the teaching profession.

#### 4.2 Response on the suitability of the current curriculum

**Table 4.2: The Education Curriculum caters for the needs and interests of learners**

Response	Frequency	Percentage
The curriculum used caters for learners with special needs:		
Agree	9	30
Strongly agree	3	10
Disagree	16	53.3
Strongly disagree	2	6.6
Neutral	0	0
<b>Total</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>100</b>

Source: Primary Data

According to the study findings as indicated in table 4.2 above, the curriculum that is being used in regular school settings does not really address the learning needs and interests of learner's with special needs. 53.3% of the respondents interviewed strongly disagreed with regard to the current curriculum being used to teach both learners with special needs together with those without specific learning difficulties.

Since only 30% of the respondents agreed about the relevance of the current curriculum in addressing the learning needs and interests of learners with specific learning difficulties, it becomes evident to make a plausible conclusion that the failure of the ministry to draft an independent curriculum to learners with specific learning difficulties is among the most crucial factors behind their poor academic performance in regular schools.

#### **4.3: Response on the attitude of the various players onto learners with special needs**

**Table 4.3: Attitudes of teachers, pupils and the community are positive in aiding the learning of pupils with special needs:**

<b>Response</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
Agree	10	33.3
Strongly agree	5	16.6
Disagree	10	33.3
Strongly disagree	5	16.6
<b>Total</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>100</b>

Source: Primary Data

Study findings in table 4.3 above gives the responses of the respondents as regards the impact of attitudes of the different stakeholders in aiding the education needs of learners with special needs. The response of the respondents showed a fifty-fifty take where by half agree about the variable just as half disagree about the same item under analysis. Thus, 33.3% of the respondents agree that the attitudes are positive enough just as 33.3%

also disagree and therefore, suggesting some aspects of negative trends towards learners with special needs.

#### **4.4: Response about the will of school administration to offer support**

**Table 4.4 School Administration is always willing and available to offer support to learners with special needs:**

<b>Response</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
Agree	17	56.6
Strongly agree	6	20
Disagree	2	6.6
Strongly disagree	5	16.6
Neutral	0	0
<b>Total</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>100</b>

Source: Primary Data

Research finding in table 4.4 above gives a justification to the fact that the school administration are some what committed to giving necessary consultations as well as advice solicited by the hearing impaired learners in regular/inclusive schools. As stated above, 56.6% of the respondents agreed with the positive and availability of teachers in helping the learning of special groups.

This finding is in contrast with the respondent's views and opinion about the attitude of teachers and other stakeholders in facilitating the education needs of learners with special needs. However, there are still some gaps since an approximate of 16.6% of the

respondents to the study strongly disagreed on the contribution of the school administration towards facilitating the education needs of learners with specific learning difficulties.

#### **4.5: Role of the community towards learners with special needs**

**Table 4.5: There is a positive community role in helping special needs pupils and does regular sensitization programmes about their abilities:**

<b>Response</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percentages</b>
Agree	8	26.6
Strongly agree	5	16.6
Disagree	14	46.6
Strongly disagree	3	10
<b>Total</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>100</b>

Source: Primary Data

According to research findings on table 4.5 above, 26.6% of the respondents agreed that the community is trying its level best in assisting special needs learners to access education as compared to 16.6% of the respondents who strongly agreed. However, given the fact that 46.6% in addition to 10% of the respondents disagreed and strongly disagreed on the role of the community shows the extent to which efforts need to be devoted towards working and encouraging the community to come up with programmes that are capable of addressing the learning needs of special needs learners.



#### 4.6: Response on the availability of educational resources to learners

**Table 4.6: Education resources such as libraries and adapted physical instructional materials are available and enough:**

Response	Frequency	Percentage
Agree	10	33.3
Strongly agree	5	16.6
Neutral	0	0
Disagree	15	50
Strongly disagree	0	0
<b>Total</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>100</b>

Source: Primary Data

According to research findings in table 4.6 above there seems that the availability of school resources to facilitate the learning of special need learners are not available or if available, they are not enough as well as adequate to respond to the needs of these learners. This is supported by 50% of the respondents who disagreed with the view that learning and education resources are adequate enough and always always available.

However, the conclusion here is that the educational resources are there though not enough as supported by 33.3% and 16.6% of the respondents who agreed and strongly agreed respectively about the availability of these educational resources that facilitate and aid the learning of pupils with specific learning difficulties.

## CHAPTER FIVE

### SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

#### 5.0 Introduction

In this chapter, the researcher gives his personal views and opinion about the study findings. This has been done through a detailed description of the summary, conclusions, recommendations and areas for further research.

#### 5.1 Summary

The study findings conducted revealed that regular primary schools have quite a number and many categories of learners with special needs but the researcher was mostly interested with those with specific learning difficulties among others. These are learners who are found in all classes within the school. The researcher interviewed 30 teachers who mostly man classes 1-6 in a school. Due to diversity of learning disability in many of the schools, children are able to interact and cope properly with all of them.

It can be said that the school curriculum as per the research findings does not cater for individual needs of learners with special needs since it does not put into consideration their needs and interests given their different disabilities. This is a fact discovered by 53.3% of the total percent5age of respondents who participated in the study. Thus, such a finding necessitates the establishment of an independent school curriculum for these learners with special needs.

The attitudes of teachers and the general community need to change towards those directions capable of bringing about a total change in the way they perceive and recognize the presence of learners with special needs most especially as far their education needs and support is concerned. Such a change shall enhance the academic achievements of such learners as well as being in position to respond to their diverse needs in the social and economic environment.

School administration looks to be committed to some extent on the need to give the necessary assistance whenever consulted by learners with special needs a fact that was indicated by the study findings by a percentage of 56.6% of the respondents. The question to be answered here is; are they really trained in handling such a special group of learners? and above all, are they motivated by the education ministry to enable them commit themselves towards the same? If the answer is a positive one, then the learning needs of special needs learners are attended to properly.

Concerning the education resources such as libraries, and other instructional materials, the education ministry in consultation with other educational planners has a task of ensuring that they are made available and in the correct numbers that have a high chance of responding to the needs of learners with specific learning difficulties. If done so, then learning will be made easier and as a result, enhance the academic achievements of such learners.

## **5.2 Conclusion**

From the study findings as presented in the various tables and arguments, it can be rightly concluded that in regular school settings, the learning needs of learning with specific learning difficulties have not yet been addressed properly since there are some gaps that exist in the way they are handled and managed by the various stakeholders especially with regard to their teacher's attitudes towards them, the level of interaction with their fellow peers and above all, the role and nature of enabling environment that the community establishes or develops and the extent to which it will be able to respond to the learning needs of special needs learners leaves a lot to be debated. Thus, all stakeholders who handle these learners have a duty of ensuring that they facilitate the learning needs of these categories of learners.

## **5.3 Recommendations**

The researcher recommends that since sometimes it is difficult to detect children with Specific learning difficulties, so as to categorize them as a group deserving special treatment, it is imperative that early intervention as far as their identification need to be given maximum attention by various stakeholders right from their homes to teachers as well as other community members so as to design early programmes capable of responding to their learning needs in time.

The researcher is fully convinced that with an active participation of the community members towards accepting and giving assistance/support to children with special needs education shall have an important bearing towards their academic achievements. Thus,

there is a need of sensitizing community stakeholders about the desire of recognizing and appreciating while responding to the needs of learners with specific learning difficulties.

In addition, encouraging of workshops and seminars within school settings and the wider communities where stakeholders come together and perform a number of simulation programmes designed specifically towards drawing the attention of community members towards devoting their time to the needs of such learners.

Such programmes have the significance of bringing a positive contribution on the side of their peer groups to associate and cooperate properly with them without any form of discrimination. Through this, the learning environment for such learners with specific learning difficulties will be shaped in a way that respondent to their needs and interests.

The ministry of education should train more teachers on special needs education. These teachers should be in position of handling all categories of special needs in an inclusive school setting. Equally the ministry should handsomely reward these teachers by upgrading them and paying them an adequate salary that are in position to buy their commitment towards answering the learning needs of the learners with special needs.

#### **5.4 Areas for further Research**

Given the findings of the study, it is not enough to draw general conclusions that the findings will help improve and respond to the learning requirement and needs of learners with specific learning difficulties. However, it is in the school best interest that further research is taken in areas such as: challenges and outside the school environment that affects the performance of learners with special needs; the attitude and perception of teachers towards the inclusion of learners with special needs in regular schools.

## REFERENCES

- Farnt, J.S (1980). *Principles and practice of Education*: Longman Group, UK
- Hervand L.W; (1974), *An Introduction to Special Education*, Charles E.Meril publishing company, Columbus Ohio, USA.
- Ndurumo M.M. (1995). *Exceptional Children Development consequences and Intervention*, Longman Kenya Limited.
- Wilson D. Mary; (1981). *The Curriculum in Special Schools – (School Council Working)* 160 Great Portland Street London, WIN 6LC
- Sage D, D. (1986). *Policy and Management in Special Education*, Indiana University Clerkenwell; (2006), *Young Minds Parents Information Service*, London, UK.
- Melville, J and Subotsky, F. (1992). *My Child Needs Help*, A guide for worried parents
- Lynas, W. (1986). *Integrating the Handicapped into Ordinary Schools*: Washington DC: Croon Helm Ltd, U.S.A.
- Nolan, M and Tucker, I. (1981). *The Hearing Impaired Child and the Family*, London: Souvenir Press, Ltd.
- Schmid, E.R and Nagata, L.M (1983). *Contemporary Issues in Special Education*, Second Edition, McGraw Hill, New York.
- Skjotem, M.D (1997). *Concepts in Special Needs Education*, Kampala: Uganda National Institute of Special Education.
- Daris, H and Silverman, S.R. (1978). *Hearing and Deafness*, Fourth Edition, New York: Halt Rinehart and Winston.
- Gottlieb, J. and Gottlieb, B.W (1987). *Advances in Special Education*, London: Jai Press Inc.
- Gulliford, M. (1971). *Special Education Needs*, New York: Kogan Page Ltd.

Johnson, J.C (1962). *Educating Hearing Impaired Children in Ordinary Schools*: Manchester: Manchester University Press.

Jacob, L.M. (1974). *A Deaf Adult Speaks Out*, Washington DC: Gallaudet College Press.

Randiki, F. (2002). *Historical Development of Special Needs Education*, Nairobi: KISE.

Madison, M. (1978). *Hearing Aids, Lip-Reading and Clear Speech*, Manchester: Manchester University Press.

Montgomery, R. (1968). *Integration in Action*, Oxford: The NFER-Nelson Publishing Company Ltd.

Moore, S. (1971). *The Exceptional Child*, Pennsylvania: McGraw Hill Inc.

Nick, H. (1977). *Educating Hearing Impaired Children in Ordinary Schools*, Manchester: Manchester University Press.

Ominde Commission, Government of Kenya 1964.

Special Learning Corporation, 1979.



**Appendix i**  
**Questionnaire Form**

Dear respondent. I am, a student of Kampala International University pursuing a Bachelors Degree of Education in Special needs. The purpose of this study is to seek information on the performance of the hearing impaired learners in regular school as a partial fulfillment for the above mentioned degree.

Feel free therefore to give your views and opinions on this investigation since all the information given shall be treated confidential without passing them to any third party.

Your cooperation on the same within a period of two weeks shall be highly appreciated.

**Profile of the respondents**

**Age:**

36-40+            (    )  
30-35            (    )  
25-29            (    )  
20-24            (    )

**Gender:**

Male (    )            Female (    )

**Marital Status:**

Married (    )    Single (    )    Divorced (    )    Widowed (    )

**Educational Qualification:**

Masters            (    )  
Degree            (    )  
Diploma            (    )  
Certificate        (    )

**Number of years serving in school as a teacher:**

- 1-4 ( )  
5-8 ( )  
9-12+ ( )

1. Do you have learners with specific learning disabilities in your school?

.....  
.....  
.....

2. How do these learners interact with their fellow peers without any learning disability?

.....  
.....  
.....

3. Do parents accord necessary assistance towards these learners academic needs and interests?.....

.....  
.....

4. Are there measures put in place by the ministry of education on these learners education?.....

.....  
.....

5. The school curriculum caters for the needs and learning difficulties of learners with special needs:

- A) Agree ( )  
B) Strongly agree ( )  
C) Disagree ( )  
D) Strongly disagree ( )  
E) Neutral ( )

6. Attitudes of teachers, pupils and the community are positive in aiding the learning of pupils with special needs:

- A) Agree ( )  
B) Strongly agree ( )  
C) Disagree ( )  
D) Strongly disagree ( )  
E) Neutral ( )

7. The School Administration/teachers are always willing and available to offer support to learners with special needs:

- A) Agree ( )
- B) Strongly agree ( )
- C) Disagree ( )
- D) Strongly disagree ( )
- E) Neutral ( )

8. There is a positive community role in helping special needs pupils and does regular sensitization programmes about their abilities:

- A) Agree ( )
- B) Strongly agree ( )
- C) Disagree ( )
- D) Strongly disagree ( )
- E) Neutral ( )

9. Education resources such as libraries and adapted physical instructional materials are available and enough to facilitate the learning and academic needs of special needs learners:

- A) Agree ( )
- B) Strongly agree ( )
- C) Disagree ( )
- D) Strongly disagree ( )

10. What recommendations and measures can you put forward on the education of these learners?.....

.....

.....

.....

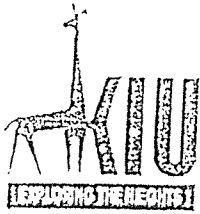
.....

.....

.....

.....

**Thank you for your time.**



Kampala International University  
Institute of Open and Distance Learning  
P O Box 20000 Kansanga, Kampala, Uganda  
256 41 373 498/ 256 41 373 889 (Ug) 254 20246275 (Ke)  
e-mail: [efagbamiye@yahoo.com](mailto:efagbamiye@yahoo.com) Tel: 0753142725

## Office of the Director

24<sup>th</sup> April 2008

### TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN:

Dear Sir/Madam,

RE: INTRODUCTION LETTER FOR ~~MS/MRS/MR.~~ SULEIMAN - A. HUSSEIN

REG. #. B.E.D- / 13711 / 61/DF

The above named is our student in the Institute of Open and Distance Learning (IODL), pursuing a Diploma/Bachelors degree in Education.

He/she wishes to carry out a research in your Organization on:

Challenges affecting the academic  
achievements of Learners with Special  
needs: A Case study of Galbet Zone  
Gariissa district North Eastern Province Kenya

The research is a requirement for the Award of a Diploma/Bachelors degree in Education.

Any assistance accorded to him/her regarding research will be highly appreciated.

Yours Faithfully,

MUHWEZI JOSEPH  
HEAD, IN-SERVICE

