

**ACADEMIC CHALLENGES FACING THE VISUALLY IMPAIRED
LEARNERS IN AN INCLUSIVE SETTING IN THE SELECTED
SCHOOLS OF NAIROBI DISTRICT,
KENYA**

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**A RESEARCH REPORT PRESENTED TO THE INSTITUTE OF OPEN AND
DISTANCE STUDIES IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF THE
REQUIREMENT FOR THE DEGREE BACHELOR
OF SPECIAL NEEDS EDUCATION OF KAMPALA
INTERNATIONAL UNIVERSITY**

DECEMBER, 2008

DECLARATION

I, JERUSA SARANGE ONYIEGO declare that this project is my original work and has never been presented to any other university for award of any academic certificate or anything similar to such. I solemnly bear and stand to correct any inconsistency.

Signature Jnagati.....

DATE: 18/8/2009.....

JERUSA SARANGE ONYIEGO

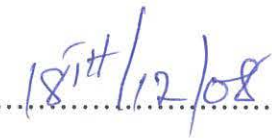
APPROVAL

This is to acknowledge that this Report has been under my supervision as a university supervisor and is now ready for submission.

Signatures

Date


.....


.....

MR. SAMANYA BULHAN

DEDICATION

This work is affectionately dedicated to my beloved husband and my children for their support patience and understanding during this period of study not forgetting all those who constantly wished me success.

AKNOWLEDGEMENT

I also owe a lot of appreciation to all those who assisted me in carrying out this research. I am grateful to my supervisor Mr. Samanya Bulhan who tirelessly went through my work and inspired me to dig deeper into the core of the matter. His kind criticism, patience and understanding, assisted me a great deal.

I am indebted to my friends who gave me encouragement in time of difficulties. Thanks also go to all those lecturers who impacted professionalism into my work.

I wish to thank my family for their love, financial support and inspiration during my stay in Kampala International University (K.I.U).

Finally, I would like to thank all my respondents and those within a short notice without which this work would not have been possible.

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ABSTRACT

The purpose of this study was to examine the challenges of inclusion of children with Visual impairments in regular primary schools in Nairobi District, Kenya.

The specific objectives of the study were to assess the relevance of primary education currently offered to children with Visual impairment, to explore the disability specific challenges of children with Visual impairment; and to investigate the constraints to the provision of educational service for children with Visual impairment. The methods used for data collection was questionnaires and interview guides to pupils, teachers and head teachers of the schools involved in the study.

In chapter four, the findings were presented and interpreted in relation to the study objectives and research questions. While linking to the existing literature, results included demographic characteristics, frequency and percentages. Based on the findings it was observed that children with Visual impairment are faced with major disabilities and the education system of Kenya is not so favorable to the children with disabilities. In chapter five, development of solutions to the problem, summary of the findings and conclusions were attempted.

The findings suggested recommendations that the Education Ministry design special learning programme for children with Visual impairment. This is because; the findings of the study indicate that children with Visual impairment could neither benefit from special schools nor inclusive schools.

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background of the study

Majority of an estimated 150 million children throughout the world remain deprived of learning opportunities. Despite advances in education, in developing countries less than five percent of disabled children go to school. (UNICEF 2000)

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

The increase in the number of slow learners and children with learning disabilities especially the physically handicap in schools in Africa has become a major issue and concern. (Bellany C. 1999), the situation is reflected in various school-leaving examinations, where an average of 30 percent of the results are below average or failures each year. Although there are no statistical records available in most African countries on the number of children and youth with learning disabilities, it is believed that about 8 percent of the students in school are experiencing learning difficulties in the classroom. (The New Vision 2000)

The schools are not built to cater for any disability. To provide education for the children with any special needs there must be adjustments which

have to be financed by someone to enable free access. The schools are required to adjust to accommodate various needs according to the special disabilities of the children in the local community. Currently there is no law that guides this adjustment, making most schools at no obligation to provide disability friendly education. Many have therefore missed school all together.

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

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

The Kenya's education system offers an inappropriate curriculum for children with disabilities. The curriculum at primary level has become increasingly irrelevant to the skills that these children need in their day today lives out side school. The emphasis is on academic subjects, rather than balancing theory with the teaching of independent living skills. (Kandyomunda B. 1998). Most children with disabilities do not go

beyond primary level. Therefore the education they receive in primary is critical as it is the formulation for their livelihood.

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

1.2 Statement of the problem

It's unfortunate that pupils with Visual impairments still face the same school structures and systems both in instruction and examination. This is unfortunate given the fact that children without disabilities have advantages in various areas and cannot therefore be expected to fairly compete with pupils with disabilities. How can a pupil with out hands face the same examination with a pupil with all the hands in the same time using the same equipments? How can a pupil who uses his/her legs to write be examined on the same time and using the examinations that require the use of hands-based equipments like geometrical set? It's from this that the study will be undertaken.

1.3. Objectives of the study

The general objective of the study was to examine the challenges of inclusion of children with Visual impairments in regular primary schools in Nairobi District, Kenya..

Specific objectives of the study were:

1. To determine the problems faced by children with Visual impairments in accessing education.
2. Determine the relevance of the education currently offered to children with Visual impairments.
3. To suggest solutions that can avert the problem

1.4 Research questions

1. What are the problems faced by children with Visual impairments in accessing education.
2. Is the Kenyan education system relevant to children with Visual impairments?
3. What are the suggestions that can avert the problem?

1.5 significance of the study

The study will raise awareness and discussion among educational planner, public and private stakeholders concerned with providing access to education and the equalization of opportunities for children with Visual impairments.

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

The study will focus on the relevance and accessibility levels of the education system of Kenya to children with Visual impairments. This will therefore help government to take into consideration what is necessary for children with disabilities in regards to education.

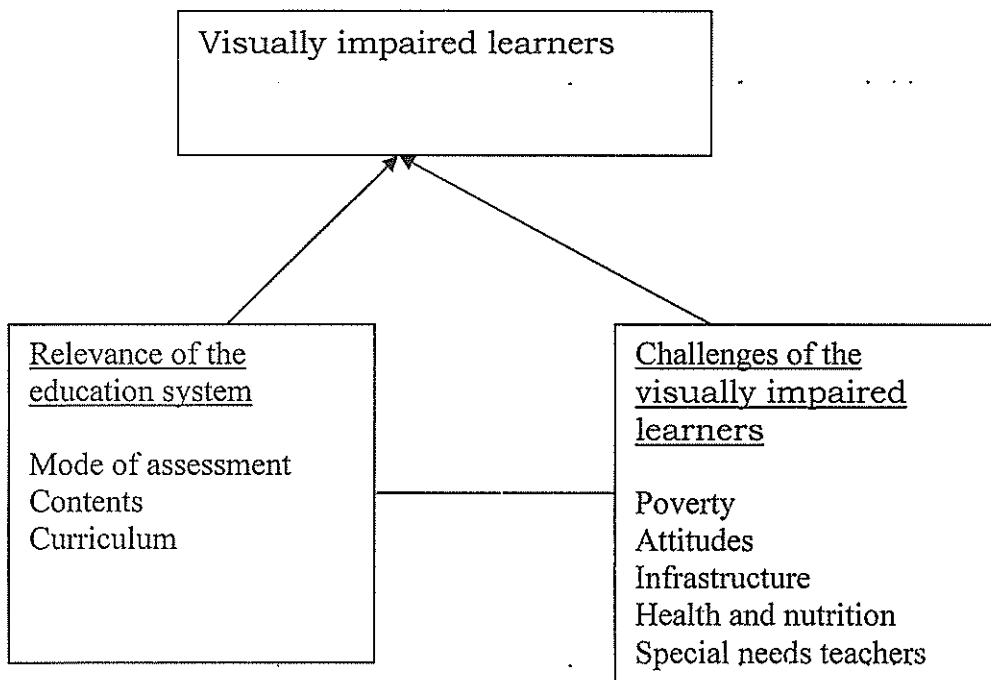
CHAPTER TWO

REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

2.0 Introduction

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

2.1 Conceptual framework



2.2 Definition of Visual impairment

Visual impairment is a general term including of Visual which refers to persons with any type or degree of Visual loss that causes difficulty working in a traditional way. It can affect the whole range or only part of the auditory spectrum which, for speech perception, the important region is between 250 and 4,000 Hz. The term Visual is used to describe people with profound Visual loss such that they cannot benefit from amplification, while hard of Visual is used for those with mild to severe Visual loss but who can benefit from amplification. (Government of Canada, 2007)

2.3 Kenya's education system

The strength of Kenya's education system can be categorized as thus: According to Coldough (1980), "Primary schooling is beneficial to developing countries even when the school quality is low". Through Kenya's free primary education policy, a goal was set to achieve University primary education by the year 2010. This is a major milestone in the education section such commitment is also evidenced by the increasing expenditure in education programmes (Reloitte and Touche, 2001).

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

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

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

An effective education system should adapt to the society social and economic changes quietly. It should be highly sensitive to these changes developing the necessary training, and the output of skills most needed by the country at any time. However, as Brown (1990) noted, Kenya's education system tends to lag behind, which affects the development of society. The weaknesses of Kenya's education systems are as follows; The education curriculum is becoming increasingly irrelevant (UNICEF, 1989) and yet in the area of skill training, there has not been an increase in opportunities at the primary and post primary level.

According to Okech (1995), the centralized curriculum approach to Kenya's education system is mainstreamed highly competitive and examination oriented.

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

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

2.4 problems faced by children with disabilities in accessing education.

Poverty.

Barton and Wamai (1994) argue that general access to education in Kenya is affected by high educational costs and household poverty. The cost of educating a child in a private institution that caters for special needs ranges from about 192 to 641 dollars per term - a considerable expense in a country where, according to the United Nations Human Development Report for 2003, about 23 percent of people live on less than a dollar a day. (UNHDP 2003)

The extreme poverty that affects many Kenyans means that most children will not attend school and more especially children with disabilities and so most of them will remain at home doing domestic work. (END/2004).

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

Attitudes

Family perception of the disabled child greatly affects whether the child would be enrolled in school, the type of education they would receive, and the type of school they would attend (government or private).most of these children are seen as useless and a burden to the problem.(UNESCO 2001).

At school, and outside of school, the peers of children with disabilities participate in name calling and bullying. At extreme cases, the peers beat the children with disabilities. The teacher's attitudes also affect the child access to education. (Jones, H, 2002)

School infrastructure

With the introduction of free primary education, primary school enrolment almost tripled. This surge of pupils poses challenges for the educational facilities, and for the children with special needs who wish to access them. The enrolment of children with disabilities has increased, yet the physical infrastructure remains inaccessible, preventing them from integrating into the school system. Children with motor impairments, Visual impairments, visual impairment and mental illness have found it difficult to cope, and often decide to drop out of school. (Jewell, M. 1990).

There are an inadequate number of instructional materials including Braille equipment, textbooks, sports equipment, and other learning aids, both in the inclusive schools and in the units, specially equipped to meet the needs of children with disabilities. In the units, the lack of resources and aids makes it difficult for the teachers to effectively instruct children with disabilities peers (UNICEF 2005).

Trained Special Needs Educational Teachers

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

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

While some challenges generally affect all categories of children with disabilities, there are some which are specific according to each disability.

Children with movement impairment seem to access education more than counterparts. This is because they do not require special resources and materials, as compared with children with other disabilities. (Penny M. 2000) Crawling was a big problem for those with movement especially when it is raining or I school that had rough terrain.

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

health and nutrition

Children with Visual impairments have a health problem and this affects their accessibility to school since most schools do not have enough health facilities. (Russel-Fox, J. 2001) Poor feeding programs also

contribute to children with disabilities missing out on education. Most schools do not provide meals for the children and the parents do not have enough money to provide food for the children in school. Some parents have the money but think that it is the responsibility of the schools to provide meals.

2.5 Relevance of the education system to children with disabilities.

The school syllabus and mode of instruction tend to benefit the non-disabled child more than the children with disabilities.

Mode of Assessment

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

Content

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

CHAPTER THREE

METHODOLOGY

3.0 Introduction

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

3.1 Research Design

This study followed a descriptive research design because the researcher used one Division in the District as a case study. Qualitative method was used in this study. The quantitative and qualitative techniques were used to collect and analyze data on the parenthood practices.

3.2 Study Population

The study was carried out in the selected primary schools in Nairobi District, Kenya. The study involved pupils and teachers.

3.3 Sample Framework

3.3.1 Sample Size

A total of fifty respondents were used from the total population of the schools which were used for this study as illustrated by the table 3.1

Table 3.1: Categories of Sample

Categories of Respondents	Sample
Teachers	20
Learners	80
Total	100

3.3.2 Sample Technique

Using a convenient sampling technique, a total of fifty respondents were picked at random to participate in this study.

3.3.3 Sample Procedure

In carrying out research the researcher first got a release letter from the course administrators which the researcher took to the schools under study. The researcher then was given permission by the authority to access information from the school.

3.4 Methods for Data Collection

3.4.1 Instruments

- **Questionnaires**

These were used to collect information from some learners since these respondents are literate and are able to understand the language being used.

- **Interviews**

Interviews were held with teachers and parents since they are busy and have no time to answer questionnaires.

3.4.2 Sources of Data

This study used both primary and secondary data:

Primary data was collected using Questionnaires and Interview Guides, which was given to students, Parents and Teachers respectively.

Secondary data was through Document analysis in the form of Reports, training manual, news papers, and journals for the period under study was read and the required data collected from them.

3.5 Data Processing and Analysis

Qualitative data involved three sets of activities which included editing, coding and frequency tabulations. Editing was done by looking through each of the field responses from questionnaires and interview guides ascertaining that every applicable question has an answer and all errors eliminated for the completeness, accuracy and uniformity.

The researcher then proceeded on to coding the various responses given to particular questions that lack coding frames, he then established how many times each alternative response category was given an answer using tally marks which was later added up.

Data was then presented in frequency tabulations rendering it ready for interpretation. Quotations and field notes made were also included.

CHAPTER FOUR

PRESENTATION OF RESEARCH FINDINGS, DISCUSSION AND INTERPRETATION

4.0 Introduction

The chapter is a presentation; interpretation and discussion of the findings. The results are presented in form of tables and frequency counts and percentage.

4.1 Profile of the respondents

One hundred twenty questionnaires 120 were distributed to the teachers and 100 were filled and returned .This therefore represents 83% of the total number of questionnaires that were distributed.

Table 1: Gender of the respondents

Respondents	Frequency	Percentage
Sex		
Male	60	60
Female	40	40
Total	100	100

Source: field data

The study covered 100 randomly selected teachers of whom 60 (60%) were male and 40 (40%) were female.

Table 2: Age group of the respondents

Age	Frequency	Percentage
19-24 yrs	30	30
25-30yrs	50	50
31 and above	20	20

Source: field data

The age category of the respondents was divided in three groups that is 19-24 years were 30 which was 30%, 25-30 were 50 (50%) and 31 and above were 20 representing (20%) of the respondents.

Table 3: Educational level of the respondents

Educational level	Frequency	Percentage
Certificate	35	35
Diploma	45	45
Degree	20	20
Total	100	100

Source: field data

The academic level of the respondents was divided in three categories that IS certificate, diploma and degree. 35 (35%) of the respondents had certificates, 45 (45%) had diplomas and 20 (20%) had degrees.

Focus group discussions were used to extract data from the pupils. 50 pupils were included in the discussion of which 30 were boys and 20 girls.

4.2 Factors Hindering Access to Education by children with Visual impairment

The study revealed a variety of factors related to the family, community and school environment that hinder children with children with Visual impairment from accessing education. They include:

4.2.1 Non-Supportive Attitudes:

The places studied found had both positive and negative attitudes towards children with Visual impairment. The negative perceptions included: viewing children with Visual impairment as a burden, a pathetic and neglectful treatment. 42.3% of the children revealed that within their families, they were not considered “normal” or the same as non-disabled children.

Findings indicate that family perception of the disabled child greatly affects whether the child would be enrolled in school, the type of education they would receive, and the type of school they would attend (government or private).

“... Because I don't hear properly my parents only pay school fees for my brothers and sisters who are normal... Father believes that paying for me school fees is a waste of resources after all I cannot hear...” (Visually impaired child)

“My parents do not consider a Visually impaired child as they do the normal ones... they do not even allow me to see visitors who come in the home ... your place is the backyard and not the front yard...” (Visually impaired child)

The child's relationship with parents and other family members also affects their access to education. Siblings often viewed children with

disabilities especially the visually impaired as a burden, and would occasionally refuse to help the disabled child.

Some community members were supportive of visually impaired children, offering transport to school guiding visually impaired children; others would bully the child, harass them, sexually abuse them or demand them to perform child labour.

"They make me draw water from the well and do not pay me"
(Visually impaired child)

At school, and outside of school, the peers of Visually impaired children would participate in name calling and bullying. At extreme cases, the peers would beat the children. If it was reported, the teachers would respond differently, some punishing the offenders, while others would ignore the problem, encouraging the continuation of the stigmatization.

"They nick name and beat us. And when you report to the teachers, the culprits are not punished. It then becomes habitual that everyone teases you because they know you cannot chase them due to your disability and the teachers will not punish them." (Visually impaired children)

Many Visually impaired children are not prioritized at the family, community and school levels. This discrimination affects their access to education. The responses to questions pertaining to the perceptions of disability are as follows:

Table 4.1: Perceptions of Disability

Response	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Given attention	40	10.8
A lot cared for	35	9.4
Visually impaired children are normal	44	11.9
Sympathy	110	29.8
Needy	72	19.4
Visually impaired children are a burden	69	18.7
Total Responses	370	100%

Table 4.1 above clearly illustrates that the perceptions of disability are still negative among community and family members with only 11.9% of the sampled population viewing persons with disabilities as normal.

4.2.2 Distance from School

Transport is one of the key challenges preventing Visually impaired children from accessing education. Responses from both parents and their children indicate that they want to access services, but are unable due to lack of transportation. 68.6% of the sampled population concurred that education services were still not within reach of disabled children and their families while, another 23.5% of the respondents believed that transport to school is a barrier to accessing education services, especially in rural areas. Uneven terrain and slippery roads amplifies this barrier. To overcome distance and difficulty with the

terrain, children with disabilities must depend on their families and communities if they are to get to school.

4.2.3 Low Household Income

The relationship between levels of poverty, low per capita income and how Visually impaired children access services and how children with disabilities access services is still prominent. Over 70% of the respondents agreed that poverty within communities is still high. Even with the introduction of free primary education in the education sector, families with a low household income have difficulties affording the required uniforms, pens, books and scholastic materials. Without such materials, the children stated, they could not attend school. One child with disability attested;

“Our parents sometimes do not have money to buy books, uniforms, etc, thereby making it hard for us to attend school. This is not exclusive to children with disabilities but also to other children.” (Visually impaired children)

It is in the rural areas where poverty levels are quite high, and the cost of rehabilitation (including purchasing and replacing) Visual appliances, medical care, and the cost of attendants, and specialized buying instructional materials) are quite high.

4.2.4 Inconclusive Physical School Environment

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

system. Children with Visual impairments have found it difficult to cope, and often decide to drop out of school.

Of all the 10 inclusive schools visited, only 13% had accessible structures.

4.2.5 Lack of Trained Special Needs Educational Teachers

The lack of special needs education teachers is another key challenge. For example, Nairobi Primary School had a total of over 60 children with special needs yet there are only 3 trained special needs teachers for these children. The teacher-pupil ratio is 1:20, and yet this ratio was one of the lowest compared to the other schools visited. The ratios observed are much higher than the recommended ratio of 1:3. The teacher-pupil ratios in the eleven selected schools were as follows:

Table 4.4: SNE Teacher: Children with Special Needs / Pupil Ratio in 10 Selected Schools

School	Number SNE teachers	Children with special needs	Teacher pupil ratio
A	1	10	1:10
B	3	60	1:20
C	1	13	1:15
D	2	21	1:11
E	1	30	1:30
F	0	10	0:10
G	1	47	1:47
H	0	20	0:20
I	1	7	1:7
J	1	21	1:21

The ratio of special needs teachers compared to the numbers of children with disabilities in inclusive schools is quite large. This strains the teacher, thereby affecting the learning of children with disabilities. A challenge related to the teacher pupil ratio, is that of class size in the schools observed, class sizes averaged 78 pupils per class. With average teacher pupil ratio of 1:52, children with disabilities do not receive the amount of attention they require. Table 4.5 below illustrates the average class size in the schools visited:

Table 4.5: Teacher: Pupil ratio in 10 selected schools

School	Total Enrolment	Teacher: Pupil ratio
A	510	1:88
B	308	1:54
C	306	1:55
D	124	1:49
E	452	1:72
F	411	1:52
G	854	1:45
H	420	1:40
I	430	1:35
J	282	1:40
Average enrollment and teacher pupil ratio	400	1:50

4.2.6 Other General Factors

The free primary education caters for teaching and ignores other factors that contribute to the children with disabilities accessing education. This

study found out that children, including those Visually impaired children had no food to eat during the day, which would affect their academic performance. Boarding Schools however, provided meals to the pupils who are boarders. When schools were asked they do not supply meals, administrators revealed that the grant monies were too little to cater for meals, and some parents either do not have enough food, or choose not to send food, behaving that the school provides meals for their children.

"Father refused to pay for my meals at school so that, I spend the whole day without a meal... I have to wait until 4pm when I get home." (Visually impaired children).

Indeed a number of the teachers interviewed were concerned about the complacency of parents, and their refusal to provide meals for their children.

With inclusive education, some of the children with disabilities with Visual difficulties found it extremely hard to follow teachers' instructions. The class sizes in most of the schools were found to be high implying that the teachers had less time for those with Visual problems. In most schools, sign language is not introduced so far and may only be used by language needs teacher. Moreover, there is sometimes a disparity between gesturing and the actual sign language used at school thereby confusing these children. As lamented by a teacher,

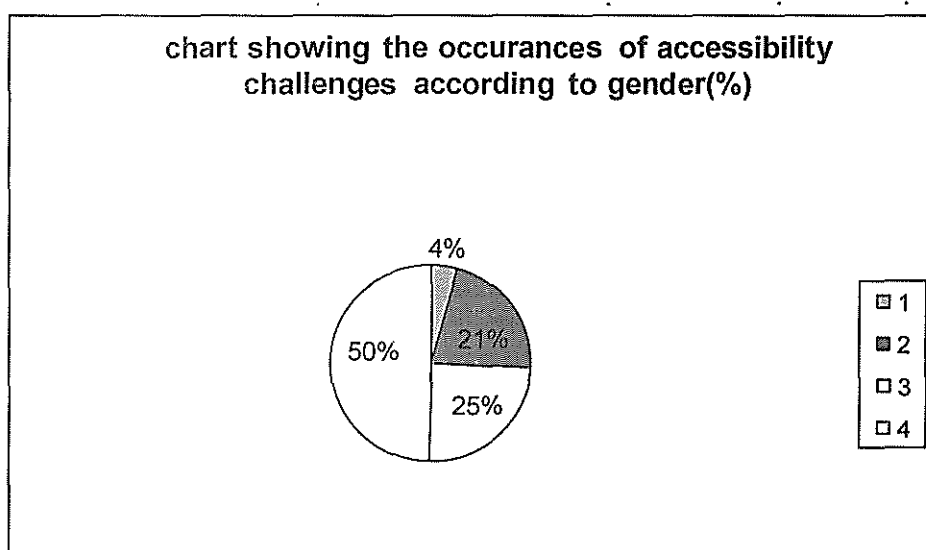
"Some children who are partially deaf face problems in class especially with big classes when they cannot hear what the teacher is saying." (Teacher).

From this study, it was also apparent that boys and girls who are Visually impaired faced different challenges in accessing education. This

is because there are still imbalances that affect the access to services by the different genders.

Findings from the survey indicated that while both boys and girls with disabilities faced challenges, the girl child with disabilities faces more challenges. The graph below indicates the responses that were generated from the study as to which gender faces more accessibility challenges.

Graph 4.1: Occurrences of accessibility challenges according to gender



The above graph clearly indicates that children with disabilities face more accessibility challenges accounting for 49.7% of the responses are compared to their male counterparts (21.4%) even within the same school. The reasons for these disparities can be illustrated as follows:

Culturally, boys are seen to undertake more responsibility in future as house heads. They need to be “empowered” through education as compared to girls who are often viewed as useless or used as helpers in the homes.

More boys with disabilities were actually enrolled in the schools that were visited during this study as compared to girls with disabilities. And in some instances, school records indicated that a number of girls with disabilities were enrolled but were not retained, as many of them would drop out faster compared to boys. A key informant observed;

"Priority of education should be given to boys because girls have a dependency syndrome, have low esteem, are easily confused by boys and society has very low opinion of girls children with disabilities." (Parent)

In all the focus group discussions carried in all the places visited in Nairobi suburb, the participants agreed that girl children with disabilities face a number of accessibility challenges. Among these were over protection from parents especially mothers, overworking at home as the girls claimed they worked more than the boys, rape and sexual harassment, problems during their menstrual periods, inferiority complex, torture and isolation at school.

The gender specific accessibility challenges identified during this study were summarized below in the table 4.7.

Table 4.7: Gender Specific Challenges

Gender Specific Challenges	Male	%	Female	%
Over protection	7	11.1	9	15.7
Over working	6	9.5	7	12.2
Child sexual abuse	3	4.8	12	21.0
Torture	5	7.9	6	10.7
Inferiority complex	9	14.5	2	3.5
Negative attitude	10	15.8	4	7.0
Biological problems	7	11.1	9	15.7
Shared school sanitation facilities	3	4.8	5	8.9
Isolation	8	12.6	2	3.5
Neglected	5	7.9	1	1.8
Total	63	100%	57	100%

The above table clearly indicates that boys and girls with disabilities face different challenges while accessing education. While the main challenge of a boy child with disabilities is the negative societal attitude (15.8%) closely followed by inferiority complex (14.5%) for a girl child with disability, the major challenge is child sexual abuse (21%) closely followed by biological problems and over protection (15.7%).

4.3 Relevance of Primary Education to Visually impaired children

The school syllabus and mode of instruction was also found to benefit the non-disabled child more than the children with disabilities. This is because children with disabilities face unfavorable conditions as already seen above yet; they are expected to compete favorably with others. The following were the areas of concern to children with disabilities.

4.3.1 Mode of Assessment

It was a major concern in this study that the mode of assessment was not popular with children with disabilities especially those in the upper primary section 51.4% of the sample population believed that the mode of assessment should suit the special needs of the children with disabilities especially during final examinations like the Kenya Certification of Primary Education (K.C.P.E). The respondents believed that children with disabilities face a number of setbacks that limit their performance in school. Respondents therefore suggested that it will be in order for children with special needs to have their own separate examinations or even worked according to different criteria.

4.3.2 Content

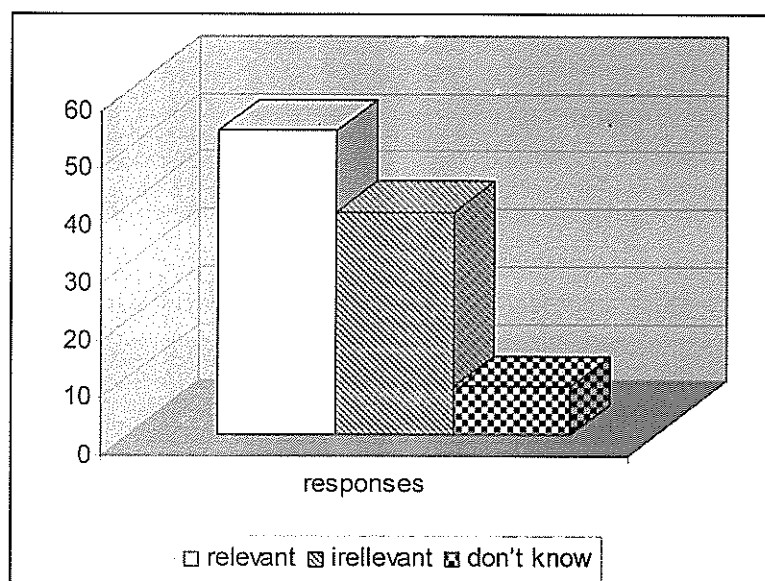
The content of instruction in the primary school curriculum includes subjects like English, Kiswahili, Maths and others. Response from children with disabilities indicated that content was well suited although some subjects seemed abstract especially to children with certain disabilities like the visually impaired. They felt not catered for in subjects like science and social studies because they lacked Braille instructional materials in such subjects as attested by one child with disabilities:

4.3.3 Mode of Delivery of Content

Nevertheless, during the study, it was found out that there were resource rooms in some of the schools where 'visually impaired' children would interact more with their teachers and also have a hands-on-experience with some of the things that were learnt in class. These resource rooms were mainly located in inclusive schools where children with disabilities would share some classes with their non-disabled peers. However, according to the special needs teachers and children with disabilities, the

time spent in the resource rooms as compared to the time they spent in the inclusive classes was too little.

Graph: 4.2 Relevance of Primary School Curriculum to Visually impaired children



Graph 4.2 above illustrates that 92.9 of respondents were of the view that the education was relevant to children with disabilities at the Primary level while 38.7% were opposed to this view, 8.4% were not sure whether it was relevant or not. Those who stressed the relevance of primary education to children with disabilities argued that it was designed to suit the learning needs of children and besides, it enables for the acquisition of basic literacy and numerical skills. Those against this view however, claimed that the primary school system has subjects that were not practical for the children with disabilities, whom they believed could not effectively employ these skills after their primary school.

CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY OF FINDINGS, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 Introduction

The study set out to examine challenges of inclusion of children with Visual impairments in regular primary schools in Nairobi District, Kenya. This chapter highlights the findings of this study makes the conclusions and also draws recommendations that can be adopted in order to increase accessibility to education by children with disabilities.

5.2 Summary of Findings and their Relevance

The findings indicate that there are a number of challenges that hinder children with Visual impairments from accessing education. Amongst these were those associated with the structures that are inaccessible, inadequate instructional materials, the large class sizes, long distances to school, lack of assistive aids and appliances, lack of scholastic materials and the negative attitudes towards Children with disabilities.

It was also revealed that though all children with Visual impairments faced a number of challenges in accessing education, those in inclusive schools faced many more challenges than those in special schools.

It was found out that boys and girls with Visual impairments faced different challenges while accessing education due to the gender relations that exist in our societies today. A number of girl children with Visual impairments reported that they were faced with child sexual abuse while for their male counterparts, indecent assault was not among one of their priorities challenges.

It was also revealed that, although inclusive education is recommended in Kenya schools today, there were still some hindrances to it like the inability of teachers to handle children with special needs at the same time with the others. Findings indicate that the teachers themselves who always refer Children with disabilities to special needs teachers do still not understand inclusive education.

5.3 Conclusion

Basing on the case study of Nairobi District, it can be seen that accessibility and relevance of education by children with Visual impairment is hindered by a combination of economic, institutional, social, political and environmental factors.

While many initiatives have been directed towards sustainable poverty reduction, many household incomes in Nairobi District, Kenya are still low. Such economic factors imply that the needs of children with Visual impairment are sometimes not met because disability may compete with other household needs like food. Poverty levels are still a harming hence economic factors affect the ability of children with Visual impairment to access formal primary education.

Institutionally, although there are some initiatives towards education for all, there is still a lot to be done. Universalisation of primary education still has hindrances. Children with Visual impairment only get the benefit of routinely going to school and socialization but not learning because their needs are not met. This is because there is lack of qualified trainers, instructional and learning materials and curriculum inadequacies that infringe on the education of children with Visual impairment.

Socially, the negative societal attitudes that abound in society have limited children with Visual impairment from accessing primary education through isolation and stigmatization. Accessibility levels of children with Visual impairment to education also vary according to gender. Intra-household relations come to play in whether or not Children with disabilities educational needs will be prioritized.

Politically, the policies, laws and programmes that can be used to enforce Children with disabilities access to education exist but are not well implemented.

Environmentally, the long distance to the education services points hamper children with Visual impairment from getting to school. Transport problems are faced due to the exorbitant cost of hiring bicycles or motorcycles to transport the children with Visual impairment to school. Parents therefore resort to leaving them at home. Roads and classrooms are inaccessible, school terrain is rough, doorways are narrow and latrine facilities are unfavorable. All these make life for the disabled child to access formal primary schooling.

Basing on the findings of this study, accessibility to education by children with Visual impairment is still very minimal. The findings herewith are important to all stakeholders.

5.4 Recommendations

- The Education Ministry design special learning programme for children with Visual impairment.
- Free Primary Education needs review so that the needs of the children with Visual impairment are met.

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APPENDIX: A
FOCUS GROUP DISCUSSION GUIDE FOR THE COMMUNITY
(FAMILY MEMBERS AND OTHERS)

- 1) Do you consider visually impaired children as normal people?
- 2) Do you prioritise visually impaired children the same way as you prioritize other children in regard to education?
- 3) Are the Visually impaired children and People with disabilities given the necessary care that they deserve?
- 4) Are visually impaired children and People with disabilities viewed as a burden to this community?
- 5) How has the government policy of free primary education affected the disabled children's Education?
- 6) What are the challenges faced by visually impaired children in this community.
- 7) What are some of the challenges faced looking after visually impaired children?
- 8) How many People with disabilities do you have in this community?
- 9) What are your recommendations to government and other stakeholders as regards the improvement of educations for Visually impaired children?

APPENDIX: B

FOCUS GROUP DISCUSSION GUIDE FOR THE CHILDREN WITH DISABILITIES

- 1) How many Visually impaired children are you in this community?
- 2) Do your parents pay school fees for you the same way they do to your other normal brothers and sisters?
- 3) Do you parents consider you a normal child as they do consider other children?
- 4) Do your brothers or sisters give you support to go to school?
- 5) Are there some members of this community who mistreat you in any way?
- 6) How are your fellow pupils treating you at school?
- 7) Do you have all the necessary instruments needed to enable you learn properly at school?
- 8) What are some of the problems you face at school that hinder your education?
- 9) What should the government, parents do solve these problems?

APPENDIX: C
INTERVIEW GUIDE TEACHERS

- 1) How Many Visually impaired children do you have in this school?
- 2) How has the government policy of free primary education benefit visually impaired children in the school?
- 3) What are some of the challenges you face teaching Children with disabilities in the schools?
- 4) How relevant are the courses offered to visually impaired children?
- 5) What are your recommendations to stakeholders on the improvement of education for visually impaired children?

APPENDIX: D

INTERVIEW SCHEDULE (EDUCATION OFFICIALS & NGO PARTNERS)

- 1) How relevant is the primary education currently offered to visually impaired children?
- 2) What are some of the challenges faced by visually impaired children?
- 3) What has your organization done to solve some of the problems?