

FACTORS THAT AFFECT THE EDUCATION OF THE MENTALLY
CHALLENGED LEARNERS IN PRIMARY SCHOOLS IN MUNICIPALITY
DIVISION IN KAKAMEGA CENTRAL DISTRICT
OF KAKAMEGA COUNTY IN KENYA

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BY

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A RESEARCH REPORT SUBMITTED IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF THE
REQUIREMENT FOR THE AWARD OF THE DEGREE OF BACHELOR OF
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DECLARATION

I Melisa Mushira do hereby declare that this report is of my own work and to the best of my knowledge, has not been submitted to any university for the award of a degree.

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APPROVAL

The research report by Mushira Melisa BED/42493/92/DF was carried out and the title: Factors that affect the education of the mentally challenged learners in primary schools in municipality division in Kakamega Central District.

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DEDICATION

This study is dedicated to all children who are mentally challenged, who face diverse challenges in their struggle to achieve academic excellence.

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Grateful appreciation is given to the following people who have tirelessly given me total support and encouragement in this special study paper. Without their personal input the paper could not have been comprehensive as it is.

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Thanks a lot

TABLE OF CONTENTS

| | |
|--|------|
| DECLARATION..... | i |
| APPROVAL | ii |
| DEDICATION..... | iii |
| ACKNOWLEDGEMENT | iv |
| LIST OF TABLES | vii |
| ABSTRACT | viii |
| CHAPTER ONE | 1 |
| 1.0 Introduction..... | 1 |
| 1.1 Background..... | 1 |
| 1.3 Purpose of the study | 2 |
| 1.4 Research Objectives..... | 2 |
| 1.5 Scopes | 3 |
| 1.6 Significance of the study | 3 |
| CHAPTER TWO | 4 |
| LITERATURE REVIEW | 4 |
| 2.0 Introduction..... | 4 |
| 2.1 General Overview on Mental Retardation..... | 4 |
| 2.1.1 Teaching strategies and classroom management..... | 5 |
| 2.1.2 Poor Teacher — Pupils relationship | 7 |
| 2.1.3 Lack of Resources and Mismanagement of the Few available Resources | 7 |
| 2.2 Factors that hinder education of the mentally challenged | 9 |
| 2.2.1 Home background of the mentally challenged | 9 |

| | |
|--|----|
| 2.2.2 Wrong choice of education provision in school | 9 |
| 2.2.5 Stigmatization | 13 |
| 2.2.6 Curriculum..... | 13 |
| 2.3.1 Importance of Educating the Mentally Challenged and the education Provision available | 13 |
| 2.3.1 Residential School | 14 |
| 2.3.2 Special Day Schools | 14 |
| 2.3.3 Special Units | 14 |
| 3.4 Mainstream Programmes | 14 |
| CHAPTER THREE | 16 |
| METHODOLOGY | 16 |
| 3.0 Introduction | 16 |
| 3.1 Research Design | 16 |
| 3.2 Sample | 16 |
| 3.3 Procedure | 16 |
| 3.4 Sampling Procedures | 16 |
| 3.5 Data analysis | 17 |
| 3.6 Limitation of the study | 17 |
| CHAPTER FOUR | 18 |
| PRESENTATION AND ANALYSIS OF DATA COLLECTED | 18 |
| 4.0 Introduction | 18 |
| 4.1 Factors affecting Education of the mentally challenged learners | 18 |

| | |
|---|----|
| 4.1.1 Response of the questionnaires | 18 |
| 4.1.2 Working experience | 18 |
| 4.1.3 Gender | 19 |
| 4.1.4 Education qualification | 20 |
| 4.1.5 Knowledge of special education programme | 21 |
| 4.1.6 Ways through which respondents learnt about special education programme | 21 |
| 4.1.7 Mentally retardation..... | 22 |
| 4.1.8 Importance of education of the mentally challenged learners | 22 |
| 4.1.9 Community value on education of mentally challenged | 23 |
| 4.1.10 Difficulties in communication | 23 |
| 4.1.11 Education resources | 24 |
| CHAPTER FIVE | 25 |
| DISCUSSION, SUMMARY, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS | 25 |
| 5.0 Introduction | 25 |
| 5.1 Summary of findings and their relevancy | 25 |
| 5.2 Discussion | 26 |
| 5.3 Conclusion | 27 |
| 5.4 Recommendations | 27 |
| REFERENCES | 29 |
| APPENDIX A: QUESTIONNAIRE | 30 |

LIST OF TABLES

| | |
|---|----|
| Table 1: Number of questionnaires | 18 |
| Table 2: Shows the working experience of the respondents | 19 |
| Table 3: Showing gender | 19 |
| Table 4: Showing the education qualifications to teachers in the selected schools | 20 |
| Table 5: Number of the trained teachers | 20 |
| Table 6: Shows information about special need education programme | 21 |
| Table 8: Establishment of units | 22 |
| Table 9: Individual who is mentally challenged | 23 |
| Table 10: Community does not value education of mentally challenged | 23 |
| Table 11: Difficulties in education | 24 |
| Table 12: Showing Education resources | 24 |

ABSTRACT

The study was carried out in Municipality division to find out the factors that affect education of the mentally challenged learners. People with disability all over the world have for a long time been considered socially and physically less capable, the purpose of this study was to investigate on factors that affect education of the mentally challenged learners in Primary schools in Municipality Division in Kakamega Central District. The study adopted the survey style since it is observational in nature. Key findings of factors affecting education of the mentally challenged learner in municipality division .According to the data collected and the analysis done, it appeared that mental retardation is not widely understood by majority of the teachers in Primary Schools in the Division. The teachers are not able to handle these pupils well. Their teaching approaches do not favor the challenged children .This is because the classes in the schools are too large for the teachers to pay individual attention to the learners; it was also evident that the parents of the mentally challenged have not taken education of their children seriously. The fewer who are literate and financially stable have prioritized education of their ‘normal’ children leaving behind the challenged children. They don’t provide them with necessary materials to support their education. key recommendations were, Parent involvement in the education of the mentally challenged is vital. The parents can be assisted through guidance and counseling. Community health workers should help by holding seminars to inform the parents on tapping their talents for self reliance in future. The parent should also involve them in activities at home to boost their self esteem.

The government should employ more teachers to lower the teacher / pupil’s ratio. It should also provide funds to purchase high technological materials to make the teachers work easy. It should also provide funds to finance seminars and workshops through which the teachers are enlightened on the importance of the education of the mentally challenged. Human resources like the peripatetic should be availed to assist in handling of these children.

CHAPTER ONE

1.0 Introduction

This chapter covered the background, statement of the problem, purpose of the study, objectives, research questions, scope and significance of the study.

1.1 Background

People with disability all over the world have for a long time been considered socially and physically less capable. The birth of a baby is usually anticipated with great excitement and expectation of a future filled with happiness and success. Failure to giving birth to a normal child in most communities has been attributed to negative thing like witchcrafts, curse or a punishment from God for wrongs done. The community views the disability before seeing the person. They make judgment about the person in relation to the disability both visible and imagined and continue to assign them duties, responsibilities and expectations pegged on the disabilities.

The growth of a handicapped child to adulthood in a family is a stressful experience a family can endure. Parental reaction to the realization that their child is exceptional usually includes shock, denial, depression, anger and anxiety. Individual handle each of these feelings differently and may remain in a certain stage longer than others. Some parents perceive the handicapped infant as an extension of them and may feel shame, social rejection, ridicules or embarrassment. Parent's reaction may be affected by economic status personality traits and marital stability. Some parents feel they should not educate children with disability and education is a precious legacy and basic human right. It aims at fulfilling the goals of the community involved both politically and socially. Education to the mentally challenged had been placed by people as a waste of materials and human resources of the affected family and the government. Learners with special needs equally deserve their right to education.

Planning and programming education and social services for handicapped is therefore very important since it will determine their social and vocational development and adjustment.

The researcher wills to commend community and the government impute to improve the academic performance for the mentally challenged learners.

In municipality division the mentally challenged learners are taken negatively by the parents, teachers and their peers mainly due to their condition.

Teachers take them negatively due to the lowering of the mean score in their respective subjects. They do not involve them in class participation during the lesson. The peers do not involve them in their outdoor activities such as play, general conservations and class projects. This leads to withdrawal of the mentally challenged. They opt to dropout of school. Those who remain are termed by both teachers and peers as low achievers hence perform poorly in various subjects. It is in view of the above that the researcher seeks to examine the factors that affect the education of the mentally challenged learners in primary schools in Municipality Division in Kakamega Central District.

1.3 Purpose of the study

The purpose of this study was to investigate on factors that affect education of the mentally challenged learners in Primary schools in Municipality Division in Kakamega Central District.

1.4 Research Objectives

- a) To find out the effectiveness of teachers in the education provision available to the mentally challenged learners.
- b) To identify factors that affects the education of the mentally challenged in Municipality division.
- c) To establish the role played by parents, teachers and other stakeholders in the provision of learning resources and support services on the education of the mentally challenged learners in Municipality Division.

d) Identify strategies / measures that can be employed to improve on the education of the mentally challenged learners in the division.

1.5 Scopes

The scope of the study comprised of nine primary schools in Municipality Division in Kakamega

Central District in Kenya. This is a flat area. Where the researcher will select three teachers as respondent in each school.

1.6 Significance of the study

Currently, education is the most important function of the local and state government. The government's high expenditure for education of its citizens demonstrates recognition of the importance of education.

Education is required in the performance of the most basic responsibilities. It is the foundation of a good citizenship. It awakens the environment. Children today may not reasonably be expected to be shocked if they are denied opportunity to education.

The study findings will create awareness to the people of Kakamega Municipality Division on the importance of educating mentally challenged learners in the society, hence elicit positive attitude towards the mentally challenged learners. The teachers in division will use the finding to improve the teaching of the mentally handicapped learners and thus improve the divisional academic performance.

Also the education officers will also use the research finding to sensitize teachers in the division through seminars on the importance of education of the mentally challenged learners' in Municipality division. This will also create positive attitude towards the education of mentally challenged learners. The Ministry of education may use the findings to improve learning provisions available by funding and giving them learning materials to improve their academic performance.

CHAPTER TWO LITERATURE REVIEW

2.0 Introduction

This chapter entails review of related literature highlighting the studies done by various scholars about affecting the education of the mentally challenged children. It will cover the following areas:

2.1 General Overview on Mental retardation

Most mental handicaps are as a result of biological, heredity or the environment in which the child is born. Thus mental retardation or physical handicap does not mean that the child cannot live a full meaningful life. There are specialists who have been trained to work with them. Handling these children requires you to have passion. It demands standing for long hours in front of a class with chalk in hand checking the progress of the students and ensuring that they are disciplined.

It however, takes extra efforts to handle children with special needs because there is a life of getting over hurdles everyday. It is important to assess and determine the severity of the handicap a child has in order to determine the best intervention and consequent methods of helping them.

Teachers working with the mentally challenged should be interested in working with the children because they need extra care. Often because of the many challenges, the teacher ought to play the role of a parent, teacher and caretaker. However, it takes the commitment of the teachers and parents normally by equipping them with practical life and social skills.

Teaching aids like pegboards, abacus, counting blocks and wooden cylindrical blocks among others has not been availed in teaching. These make learning more practical and real to the pupils. Due to this, concepts intended to be learnt are hardly acquired. The teacher has not been able to go down to the level to engage them in activities like rhyming to get their attention. Most teachers have not been able to embrace simplicity and patience when

handling these restless pupils who even use learning tools as play objects. This has led to the teachers being frustrated and causes the child to become withdrawn.

This is the first step of not learning.

Teaching has not been tailored to suit their pace of mental learning. The tight system of education which is mean-score based has been a limitation. The system does not allow the teachers chance to assess each child to determine their learning level. This would avoid overwhelming them which becomes frustrating because they feel they cannot catch-up with the teacher.

According to Waruguru (2002), some teachers object having the mentally challenged learners in their class or school fearing that the child will lower the mean score of their class or school. This is because of the exam oriented nature of our education system. Special need education has been mystified by the belief that it is very special and only for special teachers trained in a special institution; such teachers are considered capable of working in a special school with a special child using special equipment. This has led to even the school inspectors and other education, officers avoiding to carry out inspection in special education programmes as they may not understand the special world. The regular teacher therefore may refer the mentally challenged learner to the special school or unit hence denying the learner the chance to learn in the natural setting in the neighborhood.

The teachers have low expectations from the mentally challenged learners and may give him/her challenging work. This makes the learners give up trying as his/her efforts are not appreciated. Some administration and policy makers in education feel that it is improper to 'waste' scarce resource on mentally challenged learners while the normal' ones do not have enough, hence unsupportive. The charity model to disability and special needs provision has led the community and other stakeholders to leave the education of mentally challenged children as a responsibility of churches and voluntary organizations.

This has made the learners develop a sense of dependence and does not equip them with a lifelong education to exist independently in the world after school.

2.1.1. Teaching strategies and classroom management

According to Mar-land (1975) every teacher is an individual with personalities of their own and teaching approaches which are special to them. Certainly no one can take over another teacher's ways lock, stock and barrel, apply them and hope for success. No doubt you will do some things extra-ordinary things that the other one will not dare to doubt you will get away with some of them.

There are many techniques of class management for the mentally challenged children that can be distilled from the work of hundreds of teachers and have almost universal validity. Good classroom management of the mentally challenged has not been taken seriously.

The teachers have not been able to establish the warm relationship with most of their handicapped pupils. The central point on the success of the mentally challenged is obvious; everything depends on good order. Without this order, the lesson is a battle. The teacher is exhausted; the pupils behave badly and later criticize the teacher if they are in a position to do so. Lack of creation of good order in the classroom of the mentally challenged has hindered teacher's suitability and friendship with pupils. The mentally challenged pupils know which teachers keep them in order and they become unruly hence little learning takes place. The teacher rarely cares for these children. The successful teacher knows that some of his hopes are rarely attained but he is not trying and that he respects them. Many teachers with high ideas actually fail to feel sufficient care for their charges. Love alone on the mentally challenged child cannot guarantee success but it is necessary rather hard, remote, balanced, anguishing kind of love.

Due to syllabus coverage and mean score based exams; the teachers have had no time to explain the lesson content clearly. They have no time to try hard and get close to mentally challenged pupils, sympathize with their problems and chat with them to come up clearly with their levels of understanding. This makes them fail in their fundamental task of making complicated concepts simple of explaining in ways that can be understood by the mentally challenged children.

Most teachers handling these children are not good classroom managers. Whatever mode of teaching the teacher employs on the mentally challenged children and whatever subject matter or skill being explored, a teacher ought to take the major task of managing the classroom. Most of the teachers handling the mentally challenged children are not serious in controlling the group, manipulation of time, the organization of learning materials which includes the teacher's voice and manner is questionable. The teacher have not been able to observe individuals by studying their background because its time consuming.

According to Otiato (2002), a different message is communicated by an attractive, organized classroom with well displayed visual education materials than a disorderly, cluttered classroom. Any orderly classroom will have specific centers for certain learning activities. The mentally challenged learners are this way able to learn from designated areas in the classroom. The areas are known as learning centers which the teacher rarely has in their classes.

2.1.2 Poor teacher Pupil relationship.

According to Kay (1981), one of the greatest problems in teaching is the maintenance of order in the classroom. There are some teachers who seem unable to control even a small class of the mentally challenged children. The children are normally docile and their classroom is always chaotic. These teachers are always shouting at the children to make less noise, sometimes pleading with them and sometimes threatening. These unsuccessful teachers have not managed to build up a very good relationship with the children who as a result do things that displease the teacher.

Some teachers have not been able to keep order in the classroom. The children are then noisy, disorderly and the teacher constantly shouts at them indicating that very little value is being achieved. Some of the teachers have not been able to exemplify qualities of character, both in and out of class which they want the mentally children to have.

They have not been clean in their personal habits, punctual and courteous in their work.

2.1.3 Lack of Resources and Mismanagement of the Few available resources.

According to Hiuhu (2002), Oxford advanced learners dictionary 1995, describes a resource as anything that can be turned to for help. Support or consolation when needed. Mentally challenged children require many resources to enable them to develop and learn. Education of the mentally challenged children require human resources like the teacher aides, occupational therapists and speech therapists among other who have not been availed. High technological resources which can be of great help in the education of the mentally challenged child have been too expensive to acquire. They may include teaching machines and television among others.

The teachers have had no time due to teacher pupil ration and mean score based system of education to come up with teaching / learning materials. They have had no time to engage the children in activities like games, rhymes, songs, dances, drama, modeling and painting to enhance their learning. Teachers in general seem yet not to realize that teaching with words alone is very tedious, wasteful and ineffective so as to come up with locally made materials.

Lack of proper planning and attitudes of the teachers, preparation, presentation, application and lack of essential follow-up make the few available resource useless. Lack of finances is a major set back in the acquisition of education resources for many schools particularly those in rural areas. Through sponsorship, some special school for mentally challenged have been able to acquire high technological resources. Despite this, most teachers are generally not given training opportunity in training institutions or specialized agencies to train in the use of these resources.

According to Kay (1981), teaching aids are things which are intended to help the teacher teach more effectively; or better still which enable the pupils to learn more easily. Obviously, the mentally challenged children understand more readily if the teacher uses a working model or a picture of something instead of solely relying on verbal description of it. Many of the teachers in the class have not used these aids with the excuse of time limitation and scarcity of finances in the schools to purchase some of the aids. This has made the learning of



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MARKING GUIDE FOR STUDENTS' RESEARCH REPORTS

STUDENT'S NAME: MELISA MUSHIRA
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MAIN SUPERVISOR/SECOND EXAMINER: KYALZE EDWARDS
TITLE OF REPORT: FACTORS THAT AFFECT THE EDUCATION OF THE MENTALLY-CHALLENGED LEARNERS IN PRIMARY SCHOOLS IN MUNICIPALITY DIVISION IN KAKAMEGA CENTRAL DISTRICT.

| Major Areas | Required | Marks | Examiner's assessment |
|---|---|-------|-----------------------|
| Preliminary Pages: Properly written Title page, Declarations, Dedications, Approval and Acknowledgements. Table of Contents, List of Tables, and Figures and Abstract. | The candidate should present the work in an organized manner and the title page should match the text. | 5 | 4 |
| Chapter One Background of the Study Problem Statement Objectives Scope and Significance of the Study | The candidate should indicate the historical/conceptual background and the context of the study. The background should be specific, identify the gap to be filled. The objectives should be clearly indicated. The significance and scope should be stated. Candidates should indicate to which people the study will be helpful and how. | 10 | 7 |
| Chapter Two Review of Relevant Literature | Review of relevant literature should be in line with the variables and identify existing gaps. | 10 | 6 |
| Theoretical Framework/Conceptual Framework/Research Questions, Hypotheses. | The conceptual framework theoretical framework should indicate the interaction of the variables. The intervening variable should also be stated. | 10 | 8 |
| Chapter Three: Methodology Research Design Population Sample and Selection Methods Procedures for Data Collection | Candidates should indicate and justify the design used. The candidate should indicate the population, the sample size, the methods and the instruments used. The method of data analysis should be clearly stated. | 10 | 6 |
| Chapter Four Data Analysis Presentation and Interpretation of Results. | The candidate should indicate the results as per the objectives; there should be a systematic flow of the findings. Each objective should be analyzed. | 20 | 13 |
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| Reference and appendices | An appropriate format should be used to write the references and all the necessary information should be appended. | 5 | 02 |
| Overall assessment out of 100% | | | |

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these children hard since it's hard for them to understand the abstract concepts intended to be learnt.

In recent years, many new and wonderful teaching aids have found their way into the classroom. These include radio and television, filmstrip/slide projectors, tape recorders, overhead projectors,

loop projectors and many others. If these are properly used where they are available, they can make the teacher's task easier and more effective in handling the handicapped children. However, these items of equipment are all expensive and beyond reach for many schools and in areas where there is no electricity, especially in areas where most schools are, they cannot be used most teachers do not have the technical know how to operate some of this equipment.

2.2 Factors that hinder education of the mentally challenged.

2.2.1 Home background of the mentally challenged

According to Rutter (1979) and Tizard (1988), home background and school attainment of the mentally challenged are inseparable. A lot of learning which happens at home is as a result of family actions. It may or not be deliberate, it may or may not be beneficial and it includes knowledge, skills, attitudes and habits acquired by emulation as well as by instruction. Factors related to social class and ethnicity may affect the mentally challenged children's approach to education. High social status predisposed that the pupils' home environment is more enriched. The child has more exposure to many experiences. Those kept in cribs on the other hand lack physical stimulation in the form of touch and personal attention. Lack of emotional and social stimulation or interaction with others in the environment has hindered development of age appropriate behaviors.

According to Benett (1976), mentally challenged children from certain kind of homes tend to do better in school than others. This is because of exposure and involvement in home

activities and discussions. Those caged or hidden in rooms may not benefit. High social families have no time for the challenged children.

Most of their time is spent at work and the child is left with the house help who have little to do with the education of the child. Most parents take the challenge to be a disease and due to this denial, they constantly keep the child under the control of drugs to curb the uncontrolled behavior. This has in the long run ended up deteriorating the education achievement of the child.

The low social class family lack finances to take their children for educational services available. They too lack the value of the education of the mentally challenged child since they themselves could have little or no education.

2.2.2 Wrong choice of education provision in school

According to Tickel (1980, P. 16), parents are legally responsible for their mentally challenged child's education including schooling. Kembe's, How to choose a School (1981) argues that much freedom of choice should be given to parents of the mentally challenged.

Selection of the schools in terms of ability and effectiveness to the child's education is necessary. The choice made should be relevant with regard to attaching the challenged child to a learning group. This is because in the present day schools children are grouped. The groups could be placed in special school, units or included in regular classes. Building, classrooms, timetable and educational processes are structure in groups. Most parents have opted to take their children to special school settings. In this way, they are off-loaded the burden of being with their challenged children. It has not been clearly important for parents choose the syllabus, teaching methods and the ways by which each school implements the curriculum of the mentally challenged can be made readily available to parents before they choose the appropriate school for their child.

2.2.3. Lack of Parental Involvement

According to Macbeth (1989) parents of the mentally challenged learners are integral in their schooling. Inevitable, by both example and instruction, parents teach their handicapped children and through teaching they influence the extent to which their learning can be effective. They have not been on the front line in the education of their mentally handicapped children. Families, especially parents, have substantial influence upon the nature of the community which a child experiences. Parents generally determine the neighborhood in which their mentally challenged child grows up in, what books, newspapers, television or entertainment he/she encounters; what cultural activities he is encouraged to pursue and even to some extent what friendship they will develop.

Huge number of parents have no genuine concern for the welfare of their mentally challenged children. They have no powerful emotional bonds with them to provide more about their challenged child than anyone else. This is because they have the history at present and a future with their child.

According to Waruguru (2002) parents of the disabled children prioritize taking their other children without special needs to school and consider their challenged one if the finances are still available. They have low expectations from these children and they have low self esteem, some parents tend to overprotect the mentally challenged child thus preventing him/her from taking part in the daily life activities. This hampers the child's possibilities to develop his/ her potentials.

Some parents of normal' children have also taken part in hindering the education of mentally challenged children. This is because they oppose having these children in the same class fearing that the education of their children will be adversely affected.

Due to illiteracy, many parents do not know the importance of education. They do not see the need of educating their mentally challenged children when they themselves never attended school. Parents are supposed to be non-professional educatory of their mentally challenged children. This is because most of education happens outside school much of it especially in

the early years is experienced in the family where emotional bonds make home-learning effective. The parents have not influenced the sort of community-learning which their mentally challenged child should acquire. Most teachers have neglected the non professional teacher (parent) which should not be the case. This is because it's inescapable to educate these children without parental involvement.

According to Mane (1972), theorists have condemned the schools for putting out the fire of learning for the mentally challenged. They state that children who are inquisitive and explorative during their early development are often docile and passive in school, its rarely stated that one reason for this docile and passive behavior lies in inappropriate adult responses to early exploration and inquisitiveness before school age. When the parent does not reinforce these early learning behaviors, the behavior can be viewed by the challenged children as not very important and gradually decreased. To keep the fire of learning lit among the mentally challenged children, the job of the parents or parent — substitutes is not easy. Environmental conditions, limited ability and lack of information often make it impossible for parents to accept the role they most desire to fill of helping their mentally challenged child to grow into a healthy fully functioning human being. Institutions cannot take the place of parents if maximum development is sought. Emotional bonds between the child and parent are extremely important to early learning. The child's identification with attitudes and values of parents is much more likely to occur than his identification with attitudes and values of those who are not parents.

Parental involvement in the education of the mentally challenged children is therefore inescapable.

12.4 Home school liaison

According to Goacher (1975), the education of the individual child is presumably the most important reason for parent teacher cooperation. The parents of the mentally challenged children have not taken the responsibility for their individual child's education. It's the input of pupil's home learning which makes liaison with parents educationally relevant to

teacher's daily work. Parents are supposed to be co-educators of their handicapped children though it has not been the case. Most of education happens outside school. Much of it especially in the early years is experienced in the family where emotional bonds make home-learning effective. Parents have not influenced the sort of community-learning which their mentally handicapped child should acquire. A good professional teacher should not neglect the non-professional educators (parents) since it is inescapable to educate their children.

In one sense a school system is like an airline. It likes to create an image of individual service in what is essentially a group process. The parents of the mentally challenged have not had right to discuss and influence internal school processes. The parents have had very little choice. Liaison with parents has been regarded as optional or an extra favour bestowed on parents rather than an integral part of professional practice. It has also been assumed that parents must go to teachers and not vice versa. This has affected their contact because to get to the school often requires time and expense of travel, and may involve finding someone to care for younger children at home if the contact is during school hours some parents especially fathers, have been prevented by work commitments.

Cultural differences, including language problems have also deterred some parents of the mentally challenged who are illiterate. School events to which they are invited may be unattractively advertised or irrelevant to the schooling of their challenged child. Further, schools are sometimes cold, unwelcoming places and some schools have put great efforts to encourage teacher — parent liaison to no avail. This is because of attitude. Attitudes are preparedness to act or not to act and they are learned. There can be little doubt that many parents harbor an assumption that they are irrelevant to the schooling process of their handicapped child.

2.2.5 Stigmatization.

Stigma and isolation experienced by children with mental challenges lowers their self esteem making them feel inferior. Acceptance and support are important to make the child feel loved and normal which can be achieved by involving them in our everyday activities. Rejecting

the child only confirms his/her belief that he/she is inferior. Sometimes societies label these children as non-performers which drastically affect the educable mentally retarded. Owuor, M (2007,May).

2.2.6 Curriculum

According to Waruguru (2002), curriculum refers to the subject matter that is planned to be taught by the teachers and learnt by the learners at each level of education. It provides guidelines on the content, sequence of activities, teaching methods, educational resources, time schedules and evaluation procedures. The education authority has not kept the curriculum under review to cater for the mentally challenged children. Opportunities for dialogue between parents and teachers with regard to the curriculum are considerable. This has not been the case though the parents have a lot of knowledge on their children's strength and awareness which are vital in curriculum development. The details of the national curriculum that should be explained to the parents have not been done. This would have helped in choice of the right setting for the child.

2.3 Importance of Educating the Mentally challenged and the Education Provision Available.

Some parent feel they should not educate the mentally challenged children.

Education is a precious legacy and a basic human right. It aims at fulfilling the goals of the community involved both politically and socially. Education to the mentally challenged children has been placed by other people as a waste of materials and human resources of affected family and government. Learners with special needs equally deserve their right to education. Planning and programming educational and social services for them is therefore very important. It determines their social and vocational development and adjustment. Mental retardation causes children to learn slowly while others may require a modified curriculum. The children also have problems with adaptive skills that are essential for coping in the society. These skills include dressing, toileting, counting and perceptual problems where children have difficulty following directions, understanding signals or symbols. Mental

retardation is of three classifications. Some children are mildly retarded who are educable mentally retarded. They are to follow adapted curriculum to a certain degree. Some are trainable mentally retarded and follow a prevocational and vocational curriculum. Others are dependant which means they need custodial care. Regardless of the classification system used definitions and eligibility criteria can be operationalised only through the process of identification, evaluation, educational programming and placement. The type of personnel used and the nature of their qualification are considered an integral part of identifications, evaluation and programming. The appropriateness of the child educational programmer depends greatly on the ability of qualified personnel to operationalised definition and eligibility criteria through established procedure council of exceptional children 1977 educational programmers.

2.3.1 Residential School

This is a special school that accommodates children with a specific type of handicapped or disability. They provide a wide range of specialized facilities, materials and teachers trained in teaching and managing learning needs of the special learners. Special equipment includes audiometers, Braille's and wheel chairs among others. However Rusalem and Rusalem (1980) criticized such schools for segregating the child from the environment they will later grow in.

2.3.2 Special Day School

This arrangement aim at keeping the children with their parents and the community while at the same time retaining specialist personnel equipment facilities and materials. Children also retain family bond which may otherwise be absent in residential school placement like "Daisy Special School" among others.

2.3.3 Special units

According to Waruguru (2002), this is a classroom that is located in a regular but is set for educating learners with specific type of disability. It is usually manned by a specialist teacher

who is responsible for the learners' activities. They are established by the Ministry of Education, Science and Technology as a move towards integration.

3.4 Mainstream Programmers

These are programmes where children with handicap learn together with non — handicapped. They aim at keeping children within their community and allow them to attend classes with the normal counterparts. They do not demand changes in curricular provision. They follow the school system. The handicapped are expected to adapt to the regular school arrangement. The peers in their classes learn to be tolerant and understanding towards the handicapped learners. However, Shea and Shea (1997) criticized the mainstream programme because the environment is not least restrictive and curriculum is not differentiated. There are three main forms of integration: these are functional, vocational and social integration. These provisions allow learners with a handicap to enjoy social integration from the peer, relatives and society. They also interact with others without similar special needs in education. The provision also gives opportunity for learners without special needs to support those with special needs in various activities. The services include peripatetic services and resource rooms.

CHAPTER THREE METHODOLOGY

3.0 Introduction

The main purpose of this study was to find out the factors affecting the education of mentally challenged learners in Municipality Division in Kakamega central District. In this section researcher will apply the following methods and techniques.

3.1 Research Design

The study adopts the survey style since it is observational in nature.

3.2 Sample

The target population will comprise 12 regular schools in Municipality Division in Kakamega central district.

The sample size will comprise 36 teachers, 16 female teachers and 16 male teachers. The researcher will use simple random sampling to select the participants from the 12 schools. Each school will select three.

3.3 Procedure

The researcher prepared questionnaires from the research objectives.

The research selected 12 schools, female and male teachers from each school.

The researcher sought permission to carry out the study in the schools and the institutions were to brief the sample size that will be involved in the study. The participants were given 5 days to fill questionnaires, after which the researcher gathered them for analysis.

3.4 Sampling procedures

The researcher used purposive sampling since the study was specific and education of mentally challenged learners and they are handled by teachers at school participants. The researcher will subdivide municipality division into three regions which are lower middle and upper region.

3.4.1 Research Instruments

The researcher used questionnaires for data collection. The questions were close ended.

3.5 Data analysis

The collected data is in tables coded and analyzed quantitatively guided by the researcher objectives using tables.

3.6 Limitation of the study

It was the first time to be involved in a research work. This may be hard for the researcher to assemble and put in place all the required techniques or materials.

The researcher worked alone most of the time owing to the fact that she is the only one under taking this kind of research. In the urban schools consultation may be difficult. Some members of the sampled population also may have negative attitude due to suspicion in the aim of the study. The researcher experienced financial constrains this may hinder research to be fully, successful and effective.

CHAPTER FOUR

PRESENTATION AND ANALYSIS OF DATA COLLECTED

4.0 Introduction

The study reveals various factors related to the education of the mentally challenged learners in Primary Schools in Municipality Division Kakamega District.

4.1 Factors Affecting Education of the Mentally Challenged Learners in Municipality

Division

Responses of the questionnaires were teachers in municipality division in Kakamega Central District.

4.1.1 Response of the Questionnaires

Table one shows the number of the questionnaires which were returned by the respondents. 80% of the teachers responded positively to the questionnaires.

Table 1 Number of questionnaires

| Region | Number sent out | Number received |
|---------------|-----------------|-----------------|
| Upper region | 12 | 8 |
| Middle region | 12 | 10 |
| Lower region | 12 | 9 |
| Total | 36 | 27 |
| Percentage | 100 | 80% |

Source: Primary data

4.1.2 Working experience

The two shows the working experience of the respondents. This was done to establish the working experience of the teachers who handle the learners who are mentally challenged in Municipality division.

Table 2: Shows the working experience of the respondents.

| Age | Frequency | Percentage |
|------------------|-----------|------------|
| 5-10yrs | 5 | 20% |
| 11-15yrs | 8 | 30% |
| 16-20yrs | 11 | 40% |
| 21 yrs and above | 3 | 10% |
| Total | 27 | 100% |

Source: Primary data.

In this item the researcher wanted to establish the working experience of the teachers she was working with. The table shows that majority of the respondents were teachers who had worked for a long time. 40% of them had worked for more than 20 years.

4.1.3 Gender

Data collected on gender was analyzed in the table below.

Table 3: Showing gender

| Response | Frequency | Percentage |
|----------|-----------|------------|
| Female | 18 | 67% |
| Male | 9 | 33% |
| Total | 27 | 100 |

Source: Primary data

From this study, table three shows that more female teachers handle learners with special needs than male teachers. This is because 67% are female and 33% are male teachers. Female teachers have handled their own children and they have motherly values. This makes them handle any kind of learners with a special need because they have patience when dealing with learners with special needs.

4.1.4 Education qualification

Lack of enough trained teachers in special education is another factor that affects education of the mentally challenged in Municipality Division Kakamega Central District as seen from this study.

The education qualifications of teachers in the selected schools were as follows:

Table 4: Showing the education qualifications of teachers in the selected schools

| Response | Frequency | Percentage |
|--------------|-----------|-------------|
| P1 | 12 | 44% |
| Dip | 9 | 33% |
| ATS iv | 4 | 15% |
| Degree | 2 | 8% |
| Total | 27 | 100% |

Source: Primary data

Table 5: Number of the trained teachers

| Response | Frequency | Percentage |
|--------------|-----------|-------------|
| Nil | 17 | 46% |
| One | 7 | 26% |
| Two | 6 | 20% |
| Above three | 3 | 10% |
| Total | 27 | 100% |

Source: Primary data

The above table clearly portrays that most children with special needs are handled by teachers who are not trained. This affects education of the children who are mentally challenged and others with learning difficulties. Lack of trained teachers makes teachers who handle children who are mentally challenged and other learning difficulties face more challenges in struggle to achieve quality education. This is because they do not have the skills to handle learners with special needs.

4.1.5 Knowledge on special education programmes

The table below shows that relatively a good number of respondents have no information about special education programmes. This is represented by 70% only 30% had information about special education programmes. This shows that learners with special needs are handled by teachers who do not have knowledge on how to handle learners with special needs. Lack

of knowledge about special education is a factor that is affecting education of learners who are mentally challenged and others with different disabilities.

Table 6: shows information about special education programme

| Response | Frequency | Percentage |
|--------------|-----------|-------------|
| Yes | 8 | 30% |
| No. | 19 | 70% |
| Total | 27 | 100% |

Source: Primary data

4.1.6 Ways through which respondents learnt about special education program.

From the table below few of the respondents are trained on special need education. This was represented by 20% of the respondents. 80% of the respondents were not trained but they have learnt through media 16% from the colleague and 18% learnt through incidental.

Table 7: respondents are trained on special need education

| Response | Frequency | Percentage |
|--------------|-----------|-------------|
| Media | 4 | 16% |
| Colleague | 12 | 46% |
| Incidental | 5 | 18% |
| Seminars | 6 | 20% |
| Total | 27 | 100% |

Source: Primary data.

Table 8: establishment of units

| Response | Frequency | Percentage |
|--------------|-----------|-------------|
| No. | 10 | 37% |
| Yes | 17 | 63% |
| Total | 27 | 100% |

Source: Primary data

According to the data, majority of the respondents recorded that most school have established units. But few have not established a unit in their school. This is represented by 63% and 37%.

From the above table it is true that education of the mentally handicapped learners is not well established because they learn in regular class with other learners. Teachers face challenges when handling learners in regular class. This could be as a result of the education system which is mean- score based. The teacher has therefore no time for the learners with special needs.

4.1.7 Mental retardation

This was an open ended item where the researcher intended to find out the extent which the respondents understood the concept of mental retardation.

Although each of the respondents had their own ways of defining the term most of them representing 75% understood that it is unexplained brain dysfunction, a disease affecting the brain, lack of mental reasoning and understanding, a delay slowness in mental development others put it as deviation from ‘normal’.

A few of the respondents who were represented by 25% admitted to have no knowledge of the term.

4.1.8 Importance of education of the mentally challenged

The researcher used this item to know whether the respondents support and value education of an individual who is mentally challenged.

Table 9: Individual who is mentally challenged

| Response | Frequency | Percentage |
|--------------|-----------|-------------|
| No | 18 | 67% |
| Yes | 9 | 33% |
| Total | 27 | 100% |

Source: primary data

The data collected is analyzed in the table (9) 67% support there was no need of educating learner who are mentally challenged. This is because they remain a liability throughout their life, so there was no need of educating them. 33% supported education of mentally. They admitted that education of the mentally handicapped would help the society. They had a feeling that education will develop them hence making them self reliant.

4.1.9 Community value on education of mentally challenged

The research proved that community does not value education of mentally challenged learners.

They feel it is waste of materials and human resources. This is barked by the table 10 below from

the findings parents value educating other children than the mentally challenged.

Table 10: Community does not value education of mentally challenged learners

| Response | Frequency | Percentage |
|--------------|-----------|-------------|
| Yes | 5 | 22% |
| No. | 21 | 78% |
| Total | 27 | 100% |

Source: Primary data.

4.1.10 Difficulties in communication

Difficulties in communication is a very serious problem especially to the learners who are mentally challenged.

Findings from research indicate that teachers face big challenge when communicating with learners who are mentally challenged.

From the table below it is clear that teachers have difficulties when handling learners because they can not communicate easily.

Table 11: Difficulties in education

| Response | Frequency | Percentage |
|--------------|-----------|-------------|
| Yes | 20 | 63% |
| No | 7 | 37% |
| Total | 27 | 100% |

Source: Primary data

4.1.11. Education resource

The researcher proved that most schools do not provide education resources to children who have learning difficulties. This affects their performance in class because they learn better by doing.

Table 12: Showing education resource

| Response | Frequency | Percentage |
|--------------|-----------|-------------|
| Yes | 5 | 22% |
| No | 21 | 78% |
| Total | 27 | 100% |

Source: Primary data

CHAPTER FIVE

DISCUSSION, SUMMARY, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION

5.0 Introduction

The study aimed at examining the factors that affect education of mentally challenged learners in Primary schools in municipality division in Kakamega central district of Kakamega county. This chapter highlights the findings of this study, makes the conclusion and also draws recommendations that can be adopted in order to improve the performance of the children who are mentally challenged.

5.1 Summary of finding and their relevancy

This sector summarizes the findings of factors affecting education of the mentally challenged learner in municipality division .According to the data collected and the analysis done , it appeared that mental retardation is not widely understood by majority of the teachers in Primary Schools in the Division. The teachers are not able to handle these pupils well. Their teaching approaches do not favour the challenged children .This is because the classes in the schools are too large for the teachers to pay individual attention to the learners.

Government funds to schools are not sufficient. The necessary resources to assist in their teaching are not available .The teachers too feel that spending on these pupils is waste of time and resources .They have had no time for these pupils to engage them in activities like games rhymes, songs. dances, drama, modeling and painting among others to enhance their learning as stated by Hiuhu (2002).

It was also evident that the parents of the mentally challenged have not taken education of their children seriously. The fewer who are literate and financially stable have prioritized education of their 'normal' children leaving behind the challenged children. They don't provide them with necessary materials to support their education.

They do not involve them in any activity at home which lowers their self esteem. This tallies with Bannett's (1976) who stated that children from certain kinds of homes tend to do better in school than others because of exposure and involvement in home activities and discussion.

Teacher / parent liaison is also very poor. They do not follow child's performance at school which makes the teacher reluctant in assisting them.

A lot of sensitization campaign is required since the parent and the general public seems to understand the mentally handicapped learners. Consequently they do not view the provision of education to such learners as vital.

5.2 Discussion

Education of the mentally challenged children has not been taken seriously. Most of these children in primary schools in Municipality division are ignorant on education of these children. A large percentage do not advocate for inclusion. They claim that the mentally challenged learners are low achievers and they are therefore neglected. They are also said to lower mean- score in the teacher's respective subjects.

The system of education does not also cater for the mentally challenged. Though they may be poor in various subjects, they are likely to be very good in other areas. Due to that fact and teacher/pupil ratio, the teacher has not been able to tap the talents that they may have and assist them improve them. The development of a talent is what would enable to live interdentally in the future. 60% of the respondents supported the education of these children. This may mean that if an initiative is taken, the children would get assistance.

Financing of the Primary schools in the division is also a problem noted. This has led to lack of high technological materials that are vital in the teaching of mentally challenged.

According to the data collected, 80% of the parents of the mentally challenged do not support the education of their children. Some view it as a waste of resources. Those in high social class have no time for them since they spend most of their time at work. The children are

therefore left under care of house helps who have very little to do with their education. Some have gone to an extent of hiding them in cribs.

The choice of education provision has not been correctly made. The few education provision established in the division like the units are not adequately utilized a number of parents have opted to take their children to a special school that is 'Daisy Special School' which off load them the burden. These are some of the reasons why education of the mentally challenged lags behind in the division.

The researcher feels that if the teacher, parent and the government liaised, the education of the mentally challenged would advance in the division.

5.3 Conclusion

The information gathered and analyzed denoted that the teachers in the school have experience since they have taught for more than 10 years. They do not advocate for inclusion due to the system of education that demands the teachers performance in terms of mean-score. Some of the parents of the mentally challenged children are illiterate and therefore have no value on the education of their children. The few who are literate find them a bother and therefore take them to special schools.

5.4 Recommendations

The purpose of the study was to find out the factors that affect the education of the mentally challenged learners in municipality division. From the discussion, the researcher came up with the recommendation as possible remedies to improve the performance.

i. Parent involvement in the education of the mentally challenged is vital. The parents can be assisted through guidance and counseling. Community health workers should help by holding seminars to inform the parents on tapping their talents for self reliance in future. The parent should also involve them in activities at home to boost their self esteem.

ii. The government should employ more teachers to lower the teacher / pupils ratio. It should also provide funds to purchase high technological materials to make the teachers work easy. It should also provide funds to finance seminars and workshops through which the teachers are enlightened on the importance of the education of the mentally challenged. Human resources like the peripatetic should be availed to assist in handling of these children.

iii. The community at large should be involved on the education of these children. Through chief's Baraza, a lot of emphasis should be put in involving the children in societal activities to boost their self esteem. This would also enable them to realize their talents hence making them self reliant.

iv. The teacher should take the mentally challenged positively. Moderation of teachers / pupils ratio would help greatly. The curriculum should be modified to suit all learners. They should also make use of the locally available materials to simplify concepts intended to learn.

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APPENDIX A: QUESTIONNAIRE

Introduction

Name : Melisa Mushira

Gender: Female

Kampala International University

Background information

1. For how long have you been working as a teacher?

5-10 years

16-10 years

11-15 years

21 years and above

2. Gender?

Male

Female

3. Education qualification?

Diploma

Degree

SECTION B

1. Flow many special trained teachers do you have in your school?

Nil Two

One Three and above

2. Do you know anything about special education?

Yes

No

3. If yes how did you come to learn about special education?

Media

Colleague

Incidental

Seminars

4. Do your school have a well established mentally handicapped unit?

Yes No.

5. If yes are the teachers who handle the mentally challenged learners trained?

Yes No.

6. In your own opinion are mentally challenged learners different from other learners in anyway?

Yes No.

7. Do teachers in your school value the education of the mentally challenged learners?

Yes No.

8. Does the community value the education of mentally challenged learners in the area?

Yes No.

9. Do you encounter communication difficulties with mentally challenged learners in your school?

Yes No.

10. If your answer above is yes do you encounter problems while instructing learners in behavior management?

Yes No.

11. Do you provide education resource for the mentally challenged learners in your school?

Yes No.