

**ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE OF LEARNERS WITH
VISUAL IMPAIRMENTS IN KIPSARAMAN ZONE,
BARINGO DISTRICT
KENYA**

BY

JOHNSTONE C. CHELAL

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DECLARATION

I **JOHNSTONE C. CHELAL** declare that this project is my original work and has never been presented to any other university for academic credit.

Name:.....

Signature.....

Date

APPROVAL

This is to certify that this research report has been submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree in Bachelor of Education with my approval as University supervisor.



DATE 15th / 09 / 08

KIBUUKA MOHAMMAD

Supervisor

DEDICATION

I dedicate this work to my loving wife Beatrice Chepyegon and children Evans, Nicholas, Bilha and my mother Kob Kipruto for their moral support, patience and understanding during the period of study not forgetting those who constantly wished me success.

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

M.O.E.S.T	Ministry of Education, Science and Technology
V.I	Visual Impairments
I.S	Inclusive Setting
S.N.E	Special Needs Education
K.I.S.E	Kenya Institute of Special Education
I.E.P	Individualized Education Programme
C.B.M	Christoffel Blinden Mission
K.C.P.E	Kenya Certificate of Primary Education
U.N.E.S.C.O	United Nations Educational Scientific and Cultural Organization.
K.I.E	Kenya Institute of Education
E.A.R.C	Education Assessment and Resource centre
A.S.A.L	Arid and Semi Arid Lands
KNEC	Kenya National Examination Council
LVL	Low Vision Learners
GC	Guidance and Counseling
GCP	Guidance and Counseling Programmes

DEFINITION OF OPERATIONAL TERMS

Impairment	-	Loss of eye functioning due to disorder or diseases.
Visual Impairment	-	One whose vision is affected and cannot function well.
Inclusive setting	-	School-gathering learners with or without disabilities.
Convention	-	An agreement between different Nations for a common purpose.
Commission	-	Committee formed composing of professional to look into an issue critically and come out with concrete solutions.
Low vision	-	A person who cannot see well
Xerophthalmia	-	Vitamin A deficiency
Policy	-	A document agreed and recommended for use.
Pigmentosa	-	Damage of cells of the area of the retina.
Macular degeneration	-	A place in the retina where the image is very sharp.
Retinal detachment	-	Separation of the nervous or visual layer of the retina from the underlying layer.
Cataract-	-	clouding of the lens
Albinism	-	Heredity condition associated with close marriages between relatives
Optic Atrophy	-	Fibres of the optic nerve redegerates gradually and die.
Itinerant	-	SNE teacher who visit regular schools to provide tutorial and remedial assistance to the integrated learner.
Exceptional children	-	Children whose educational needs differ from those of his/her peers.
Monotheistic	-	The belief that there is only one God.

Annihilation	-	To destroy something completely. Latin word meaning “nothing”
Emancipation	-	To set someone free from s slavery.
Integration	-	Provision of services to children with special needs in the regular classroom.
Buphthalmus	-	The eye looks large and beautiful but does not respond to light.
Modification	-	Making learning environments be friendly or suitable to the Learners.

ABSTRACT

This study set out to explore the academic performance of learners with visual impairments in Kipsaraman zone, Baringo district Kenya. The research followed a survey research design. The research targeted a small population of 10 pupils and 10 teachers from the ten schools in the zone to represent the nineteen schools. The target sample was picked using purposive and random sampling. The schools sampled included: Bartolimo, Kitibei, Kipsaraman, Kimugul, Chambai, Barkebo, Kasok Kibiriokwonin, Kaptoin, Torokwonin, Kelwondonin, Kapchepkisa and Kabargoge in the highland region. The schools in the lower region included: Poi, Rebeko, Terik, Kabbilany, Mondo and Kapkoiwo. The questionnaires were analyzed manually and percentages computed then frequency tables were used to summarize the information. The study discovered that the major causes of V.I among children in the school going age are diseases like –Glaucoma, Cataract and exophthalmia and others. These diseases contribute to 60% of V.I cases among children. Other causes of V.I are accidents, heredity etc. The study also discovered that most (70%) of the LVL perform poorly. It is only a few (30%) who can perform averagely. All respondents showed that if LVL are provided with teaching learning resources, their performance can be improved. The study also found out that there are few trained SNE teachers and so there is a big need for them. In this study, the researcher also discovered that about 80% of the people in the Villages, teachers and other pupils, generally have a negative attitude towards LVL. The study concluded that there are many causes of V.I among children, but diseases are the biggest cause. LVL perform generally poor in most schools. This is due to negative attitude most people, including teachers and fellow pupils have towards LVL. Most people have a poor attitude towards LVL, there are few SNE trained teachers and GCP are still inadequate in most schools. The researcher recommends that, the government should put up preventive measures to reduce the spread of diseases like Glaucoma, Cataracts, Xerophthalmia among others. Parents should also be more careful in up bringing their children so that they are not easily attacked by such disease. Such measures may include immunization programmes, provision of good food that can improve pupil's sight and early control and treatment of the diseases, in case it is discovered. The ministry of education needs to do something to boost academic performance of LVL. This can be done through provision of more SNE trained teachers, more teaching and learning resources like eye glasses for shortsighted and longsighted. Parents, schools, and the ministry of

education should conduct more guidance and counseling sessions to try and encourage LVL to learn.

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.0 Introduction

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

1.1. Background of the Study

Education plays a key role in promoting economic, social, cultural and political development of any given Nation. The national goals of education as stated in the Ominde commission (1964), cited national unity, national development, individual development and self-fulfillment, social equality, respect and development of cultural heritage and international consciousness as the main pillars of national development. These goals are practiced in an inclusive setting as stated in Salamanca statement (1994), which stressed that every child has a right of fundamental education. The vocal point of the conference was the provision of education to children with special needs through inclusive schooling approach and to remove barriers so that all children can access to education.

According to Hegaty (1996), the first choice of placement for children with special needs education should be a regular school within the community. The visually impaired learners in our regular schools have equal rights to education. For this to be achieved there should be a provision of special facilities, qualified personnel, assistance from stakeholders, provision of resources and devices among others. However, the first choice of placement for children with special needs education should be in a regular school within the community.

According to E. Chapman (1987), a low vision learner in an inclusive setting will need to explore and discover the characteristics of shapes through tactile and vocabulary of meaningful terms. The learners should be taught with tangible examples that evidence the characteristics. Attention must be given to the learners to learn how to record subjects like mathematics data, science experiments, drawing and leveling that are appropriate for the child's level of vision.

This study basically looks at the academic performance of learners with visual impairments in Kipsaraman zone of Baringo District. It has been the wish of the study to highlight problems faced by teachers, parents and pupils in an inclusive setting in relation to education and to suggest possible ways of intervention.

1. 2 Statement of the Problem

There has been a marked increase in studies on Visual Impairments. Randiki (2002) is one of them. Despite of this increase, little has been done to analyze the effects of Visually Impairments on academic performance. This is an adequacy particularly when put into consideration the UN, Geneva Convention on the child's right to education. This study sets out to fill this gap by investigating, examining and suggesting intervention measures on academic performance of the Visually Impaired in line with the research objectives.

1.3 Purpose of the study

The purpose of this study was to explore the academic performance of learners with visual impairments in kipsaraman zone, baringo district Kenya.

1.4 Research Objectives

- 1) To investigate the historical backgrounds and development of special needs education.
- 2) To find out causes of visual impairments in Kipsaraman zone.
- 3) To examine academic performance of learners with visual impairments.
- 4) To suggest intervention strategies to overcome the problems

1.5 Scope of the Study

The research was carried out within Kipsaraman zone of Baringo District, Kenya. Geographically, Kipsaraman zone borders Sibilo zone to the East, Barwessa zone to the West, Tirimionin zone to the South and Bartabwa zone to the North.

1.6 Significance of the Study

The results of the research would give a way forward to planners of education to assess the problems and decide on the intervention measures hence check the education performance of visually impaired learners in the zone.

The study will assist the curriculum developers to come up with integrated structure of the syllabus, which incorporates all categories of V. I. learners. The research will also sensitize teachers to update their teaching methodologies hence achieve the objectives of learning. The research was intended to make parents be aware of the problems affecting the learners and suggest possible ways of overcoming them.

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.0 Introduction

This chapter deals with identification and analysis of existing documents containing information related to the study. It involves a clear and systematic location and study or reading of documents that have information related to the research problem. The review therefore highlights the historical background of visually impaired learners. This chapter also attempts to find out causes of visual impairments, It examines Academic performance of learners with V. I and also suggests intervention strategies, which include E.A.R.C, I.E.P, psychological, school placement, itinerant teachers and support services.

2. 1 Historical Background of Visually Impaired Learners

Before the 17th century, people with disabilities all over the World were considered socially and physically less capable and they were not easily accepted. Many people with disabilities were rejected due to negative attitudes towards the disability. Disability was regarded to be caused by witchcraft, curses or as punishment from God for wrongs done. According to Action N. (1981), families with disabilities were rejected from the mainstream of the community. Some African communities used to throw such children in the bushes because women were expected to give birth to health babies. The people of Sparta in Greece used to kill babies with distinct disability features. Some philosophers such as Plato and Socrates condemned people with disability as not capable of reasoning. In the 19th century there was quite a positive move towards modifying the lives of the V.I through education. It was not

until 1874 that the first school for the blind was established. This was however, the result of living conditions of the blind and societal attitudes towards them.

2.2 Evolution of the Status of the Blind Globally

According to Lowan field (1981), individuals who could not provide for themselves or take care of their own defense were generally considered a liability to the tribe or group. They were separated and this separation took two forms; annihilation and veneration. The second phase in which the blind were protected and regarded as the wards of the society was the “ward status”. The blind were kept at home as patients and people were not allowed to see them. Self-emancipation was another evolution of the status of the blind. Some blind individuals became so successful and prominent due to their skills and talents they possessed. Among the blind self emancipators was a mathematician known as Nicholas Sanderson (1682-1739) who also became a professor of mathematics, John Metcalf (1717-1791), a Scotch poet and Minister, Francois Huber (1790-1831), a Swiss naturalist who specialized in the life of bees.

Integration status of the blind was the last phase. This process was initiated to rehabilitate war blinded personnel therefore mobility training techniques were developed. Techniques promoted increased independence of the blind individuals, therefore promoting the integration into the normal stream of life.

2.3 Earliest Schools for the Visually Impaired in Kenya

According to Randiki (2002), the earliest schools for the children with V.I were started by churches, NGOs and well wishers. Thika School for the blind was established in 1945 and sponsored by Salvation Army as a vocational school with 25 students. Other schools sponsored by Salvation Army include: - Kibos in Kisumu and

Likoni in Mombasa. The Catholic Church established and sponsored Egoji in Meru and St. Oda in Siaya.

2.4 Training of Teachers for Children with Visual impairments in Kenya

Randiki (2002), notes that teachers for the V.I.L started their training in 1980 at Highridge Teachers Training College. The training later was moved to K.I.S.E in 1986 and was upgraded to Diploma level in 1987. In 1987 there were 780 special education teachers, of whom 408 were professionally trained including 43 for visually impaired, 135 for mentally handicapped and 230 for hearing impaired.

2.5 Inclusive Education Programme in Kenya

Randiki (2002) also noted that inclusive education is slowly taking root in Kenya. Training of teachers to handle visually impaired learners at K.I.S.E, Kenyatta and Maseno Universities are emphasizing the elimination of barriers to learning as opposed to disability. It has also been recommended that regular primary school teacher trainees be given more content on children with V.I so as to meet the learner's special needs. The low vision programmes for learners with visual impairment supported by Chrsitoffel Blinden Mission (C.B.M) is facilitating inclusion of learners with V.I. To ensure that children have access quality education in regular schools, KISE in the year (2000) embarked an aggressive Nationwide Distances Learning Training programme for primary school teachers and those working with children with Special Needs. It is believed that by the year (2015) all primary schools in Kenya will have at least one trained teacher in Special Needs.

2.6. Causes of Visual Impairments

The major causes of visual impairments include the natural factors and artificial factors. However, diseases are the main causes of visual impairments. Some of the common diseases include the following:-

2.6.1. Trachoma

Kimani (2003), has carried out a research on causes of visual impairments. Trachoma is a disease caused by an organism called Chlamydeous Trachomatis a bacterial infection transmitted mainly by flies. Trachoma is a highly contagious disease especially among children. The disease is common in the hot and dry lowlands. Trachoma spreads faster in those areas due to poor hygiene and inadequate water supply. If the disease is not treated it causes serious eye problems that may lead to blindness.

2.6.2. Cataract

According to Kimani (2003), cataract is the clouding of the lens. It is a condition whereby the lens of the eye looks Opaque instead of being clear. Cataract is the leading cause of blindness in Kenya, causing 46% of visual impairments. Diseases such as gonorrhea, syphilis and German measles cause cataract. Other causes of cataract include hereditary, examples are congenital cataract, Juvenile cataract or infantile cataract.

2.6.3. Glaucoma

According to Kimani (2003), Glaucoma is a condition whereby the eye has raised intra-ocular pressure. Glaucoma causes about 90% of blindness in Kenya. It is also a leading cause of blindness in developed countries. Glaucoma may be developmental

and a child may be born with a form of Glaucoma that is known as Buphthalmas. This is a condition where the eyes look large and beautiful but on examination, the pupil does not respond to light. Thus the child goes blind as the intra-ocular pressure rises gradually and silently. The main characteristics of Glaucoma include: - headache and vomiting, Blurred vision, Opaque cornea and problems of seeing in light.

2.6.4. Xerophthalmia

This condition is caused by vitamin A deficiency in the body and it is the main cause of corneal scarring. Kimani in his research (2003) notes that Xerophthalmia is also called vitamin A deficiency. This condition is common among communities living in the A.S.A.L areas where food is a scarce. Children suffering from Xerophthalmia in a classroom situation may be blind and will have to use equipments like Braille.

2.6.5. Retinal Diseases

Various diseases affecting the Retina cause loss of vision. According to Kimani (2003), Retinal disease is the light sensitive part of the eye. Some conditions which may destroy the central or periphery cells of the retina include: Retinis pigmentosa, Retinal detachment and macular degeneration.

2.6.6 Albinism

Albinism is a hereditary condition which is mostly associated with close marriages between relatives. Individuals who do not have the dark pigment on their skins may be mistaken for the white race (wazungu) that is according to Kimani (2003). Albinism affects learning in a classroom situation because it causes low vision. The

main problems experienced by albinism include: difficulties in writing or reading near the source of light and when carrying out outdoor activities.

2.6.7 Optic Atrophy

This is a condition where the fibres of the optic nerve degenerates gradually and die. The learner will show problems of interpreting visual images in the brain because their passage is closed. The eye looks normal but the learner could be blind. Optic atrophy is caused by: malnutrition, Toxins, infections, Tumours and head injuries. Learners with optic atrophy may experience loss of vision, lack of color discrimination and photophobia that is according to Kimani (2003).

2.6.8 Refractive Errors

According to Kimani (2003), refractive error is when there is a problem in the bending of light rays in the eye. There are many conditions where the image is not focused on the Retina and these include: Myopia (near sightedness), Hyperopia or far sightedness and astigmatism.

2.6.9 Accidents/Injuries/Trauma

Kimani (2003), observed that there are many injuries that deform the eye. These injuries can be industrial or domestic. Traffic accidents and falls may affect the brain and eventually causes loss of vision. The conditions can be prevented by becoming careful to avoid accidents. Accidents, injuries are rampant, thus many children are visually impaired.

2.7. Academic Performance of Learners with Visual Impairments

For many years, scholars have done research on academic performance of learners with visual impairments. Academic performance V.I learners are affected by the following;

2.7.1 Learning Resources

Randiki (2002), in his research notes that lack of learning resources like Braille equipment affects academic performance among learners with V.I. Certain learners will require other resources over and above those already being provided by schools. Resources to enhance mobility such as optical and non-optical devices reproduction such as closed circuit televisions and embossers will be necessary for some learners. All these will be difficult to supply to schools and lack of them will affect the performance of V.I. learners. It is also important to note that most of the resources are expensive in the market and some are not even available locally.

2.7.2 Trained Personnel

According to Wolfinger (1984), teachers do not plan effectively due to lack of knowledge of handling and teaching visually impaired learners. However, much of the teaching is incidental. Inclusive education requires that the child with special needs meet the support at the school. Most of our schools lack trained personnel like the Braille transcribers, mobility instructors and vision therapists among others.

2.7.3 Culture and Attitude

From the time of immemorial cultural practices whole over the world have been unkind to persons with disabilities. Randiki (2002), observes that Persons with disabilities were viewed as objects of bad omen and were either killed, abandoned or



offered as sacrifices to appease the gods. Most of these harsh treatments have since been discarded. However, a more salient challenge has remained resistant because people view the disability of the individual 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 these. There may not be enough evidence to support this belief yet at the back of our mind, we associate learners with visual impairments with special schools.

2.7.4. Curriculum

According to Bremen (1985), curriculum comprises all opportunities for learning provided by a school. Curriculum includes the formal programmes of lesson in the timetable, relationships, attitudes, styles of behavior and the general quality of life established in the schools. The curriculum implementation is a problem due to the fact that the pupil- teacher ratio is below the required standard and attending learners with visual impairments in an inclusive setting is impossible. During National Examinations like K.C.P.E visually impaired candidates are not provided with relevant materials and equipment hence end up performing poorly.

2.7.5 Technology

The world has developed into a more sophisticated status as far as technology is concerned. The modern technology has provided some learners with some devices that help both to optimize residual impairment and to overcome the problem. According to UNESCO (1987) most developing countries lack enough equipment to cater for the growing number of visually impaired learners. Poor countries of Africa

do not manufacture these devices. These countries end depending on donations, which sometimes are outdated equipments that lack proper service.

2.7.6 Personal Factors

Randiki (2002), in his research observed that economic factors are major causes of dropouts in learners with visual impairments. Lack of money to buy resources is a problem among most parents in Kenya.

As much as primary education is free in Kenya, inclusive education is not free.

The education of the visually impaired learners is sometimes hampered by medical problems. UNESCO (1987) notes that lack of medical services or medical personnel affect the child's education. When the children are taken to hospital they spend much of the time and end up starting school late hence their education is interrupted.

The majority of the parents with V.I learners do not know what to do with their children due to illiteracy. They take their children to school for assessment when they are past school going age. The reason is that they take their children to quack doctors who promise miracles that one time their children will see. They sometimes go ahead to "diagnose" witchcraft and curses as the root causes of V.I. The job market does not easily absorb the visually impaired learners and this has discouraged the parents and the community to have low opinion in educating them.

2.8.0 Intervention Strategies/Measures

2.8.1. Educational Assessment and Resource Centers

Ogutuu (1994) in his research observed that children need to be assessed at the assessment center by specialized trained assessment teachers and other professionals like the psychologists, physiotherapists and health personnel. The professionals identify the difficulties, guide and counsel the parent and refer to relevant and appropriate programmes that cater for their needs.

2.8.2. Individualized Education Programme

According to Mwereria (2002), I.E.P is a written statement that describes what you as a teacher and other professionals will do to meet the special needs of a learner with a visual impairment. I.E.P is one way a teacher can translate assessment findings into instructional activities. However, the class teacher should assume a leading role in designing the I.E.P using information provided by the members of the team since they are experts. Their efforts together with the teacher will help formulate methods and techniques of teaching a particular child with visual difficulties. The programme also helps in designing learning materials and other training aids.

2.8.3 Psychological support

According to E. Mwereria (2002), psychological support is necessary to overcome problems faced by learners with visual impairment. Psychologists conduct interviews and carry out regular observation on the process of assessing the learners. Children with Special Needs are guided and counseled to overcome emotional and psychological problems, which eventually affect their learning. The teacher also should support the learners and their parents and assist them to come terms with the differences within the child and societal discriminative practices. Guiding and counseling enables the learner and the parent to be motivated and be confident to participate in various activities in the school and society.

2.8.4 School Placement

Hudson (1984) suggested that it is difficult to identify an ideal way of grouping learners with visual impairments and give instructions. The visually impaired learners can receive educational instruction in an inclusive setting, unit and in full time boarding school. School staffing position, establishment, curriculum and timetable

together with physical layout of the school site have a bearing on what the school placement entails.

2.8.5 Itinerant Teachers

Ndurumo (1993), states that since visual impairments occur rarely and the number of V.I children enrolled in regular schools is too small to warrant comprehensive educational services, the recommended practice is to institute an itinerant teacher service. The itinerant teacher is to visit regular schools to provide tutorials and remedial assistance to the integrated learners. When the itinerant teacher is not around, the learners are given the necessary assistance by the school administration and teachers. The assistance includes taped lectures, Brailed and written notes for both the learners and the itinerant teacher.

2.8.6 Support Services

The way people relate to persons with special needs in education differ from community to community due to local beliefs and customs. Mwereria (2002) recommended community environment as the right place to accommodate learners with Special Needs. The community needs to be sensitized to understand the needs and abilities of learners with Special Needs in education through encouragements, involvements and organizing awareness raising activities. Mwereria further cited vocational rehabilitation support service to be offered to learners with Special Needs Education. There is need to conduct an assessment and evaluations of the learners to establish the skills before vocational rehabilitation programmes are implemented. Medical intervention as a support service is vital requirement. Most visual difficulties like eye diseases and defects can be prevented and treated. Trachoma and

Xerophthalmia can be managed in government hospitals, private clinics and NGOs such as Kenya Society for the Blind.

CHAPTER THREE

METHODOLOGY

3.0 Introduction

This chapter deals with methods that were used to conduct the research. It explains how the research was carried out step by step. The chapter deals with research design, research environment, population, sample size determination, instruments and data analysis.

3.1 Research Design

The research used a survey research design because several people from across the population were used to give responses on a particular issue. Survey design was also used to collect information from people to determine the status of a problem and it is commonly used in educational research.

3.2 Research Environment

The research environment include Baringo District, Kipsaraman Division and zone respectively and also the 19 schools in the zone. Kipsaraman zone is divided into two geographical regions of unique ecological zones. The highland region is cool and wet while the lower region is hot and dry. The researcher picked five schools in the highland region and five schools in the lower land to represent the nineteen schools in the zone.

3.3 Population

The research targeted a small population of 10 pupils and 10 teachers from the ten schools in the zone to represent the nineteen schools. The respondents were each

given questionnaires to fill and sent to the researcher to analyze. People of different ages, sex, religion and status were targeted.

3.4 Sample size Determination

The study used random sampling procedure. The target sample was picked using purposive and random sampling. The schools sampled included: Bartolimo, Kitibei, Kipsaraman, Kimugul, Chambai, Barkebo, Kasok Kibiriokwonin, Kaptoin, Torokwonin, kelwondonin, Kapchepkisa and Kabargoge in the highland region. The schools in the lower region included: Poi, Rebeko, Terik, Kabbilany, Mondoï and Kapkoiwo. In the research, we picked randomly folded papers representing the two geographical regions.

3.5. Research Instruments

The research used self made questionnaires as a tool of data collection. Questionnaires were adequate to be used in Kipsaraman zone because the targeted population is literate. Questionnaires were also preferred because they can reach many people and can be administered in the absence of the researcher. Questionnaires are cheap to administer and saves time.

3.6. Data Analyses

The researcher used quantitative data analyses because it is appropriate for the respondents. The questionnaires were analyzed manually and percentages computed then frequency tables were used to summarize the information. Targeted questions were analyzed critically and comprehensively.

CHAPTER FOUR

DATA PRESENTATION, ANALYSIS & INTERPRETATION

4.0 Introduction

This chapter deals with the presentation, analysis and interpretation of data as collected from the field. It specifically shows the description of respondents and historical background of special needs education (SNE). It also highlights the causes of visual impairment (V.I), academic performance of learners with (V.I), measures to overcome problems of V.I and the findings of the study.

4.1 Descriptions of Respondents

The researcher used both teachers and pupils to answer the questionnaires. In all, ten (10) pupils and teachers answered the questionnaire, making a total of 20 respondents. Table 4.1 shows the description of respondents by gender.

Table 4.1: Gender of respondents

Category	Male	Female	Total
Pupils	7(70%)	3(30%)	10(10%)
Teachers	5(50%)	5(50%)	10(100%)
Total	12(60%)	8(40%)	20(100%)

Source: Field data.

Table 4.1 shows that total of 20 respondents was used to answer the questionnaire, of which 12 were male and eight female. The table also shows that most of the pupils used were male (70%) while the number of male and teachers was the same (50%).

Respondents were also categorized according to their age and the results of this description are tabulated in table 4.2.

Table 4.2: Description of Respondents by Age

Age group	Pupils	Teachers
Below 10 years	-	-
10-13	4(40%)	0
14-17	5(50%)	0
18-21	1(10%)	0
22-24	-	-
25-30	-	2(20%)
31-40	-	6(50%)
41-50	-	3(30%)
51-59	-	
60-69	-	
70-79	-	
80 and above	-	
Total	10 (100%)	10(100%)

Source: Field Data

Table 4.2 shows that most of the pupils were in the age bracket of 14-17 and 10-13(50% and 40%) respectively .On the other hand , most of the teachers were in the bracket of 31-40 and 41-50 (50% and 30%) respectively.

Pupils were also categorized according to their different classes. This means that the researcher sampled pupils from different classes. Table 4.3 shows the description of pupils by class.

Table 4.3: Description of Respondents by Class.

Class	Absolute Frequency	Relative Frequency
1-4	1	10
5-6	4	40
7-8	5	50
Total	10	100

Source: Field Data

Table 4.3 shows the fact that most of the respondents were drawn from the upper classes of 5, 6, 7 and 8. It is clear that 50% and 40% of the pupils were drawn from classes 7-8 and respectively. Only one pupil was got from the classes 1-4.

4.2 Main Causes of Visual Impairments

There are a number of causes of V.I among children, for example diseases, accidents, heredity etc. Respondents in this study were asked to identify the major causes of V.I and their responses are indicated in table 4.4.

Table 4.4: Causes of Visual Impairments

Causes	Frequency	Percentage
Diseases	6	60
Accidents	2	20
Heredity	2	20
Others	0	0
Total	10	100

Sources: Field Data

Table 4.4 shows that diseases are the most common causes of V.I among children. Such diseases may include glaucoma, cataract and xerophthalmia among others. But there are also other causes of V.I like accidents, heredity etc. It therefore shows that diseases account for about 60% of V.I cases among children. This means that out of 100 children with V.I, 60% of them acquired the problem from a given diseases like optic atrophy. The implication here is that there is need to protect such diseases which cause V.I and also to put up measures to reduce or prevent other potential causes of V.I like accidents.

4.3 Academic Performance of Learners With V.I

The academic performance of learners with V.I may be hampered due to such problems. It is obvious that learner who lost his /her sight may be incapacitated to perform the way he/she would have performed if he/she had the sight. The same may be true for other problems. In this study the researcher wanted to know how the pupils with V.I perform compared to other learners who are normal. Although examination or test scores are the best tool of measuring academic performance, the researcher was incapacitated to use them. Nevertheless, the research designed a questionnaire which was used to capture data/information from the teachers and pupils about how children with V.I perform. In this case, the respondents were asked to rate the performance of low Vision learners, as directed by the questionnaire. Their evaluations are indicated in table 4.5

Table 4.5 Academic Performance of Learners with V.I

Response	Frequency	Percentage
Generally Poor	7	70
Generally Average	3	30
Generally Good	0	0
Total	10	100

Source: Field Data

It is clearly indicated by most of the respondents (70%) that the academics performance of V.I learners is generally poor. The table shows that very few V.I can perform better. According to the Views of respondents, only 30% can be average performers and no one rated them as good performers. It is hard to believe that all low Vision learners (LVL) are naturally academically poor. Their poor performance can thus be attributed to the fact that their sight is low, so they find problems in reading their books and possibly reading what teachers write on the black boards (BB). Since most books are written to be read by learners with normal sight, and since most teachers teach while writing on the BB, pupils with sight problems are seriously affected and their performance becomes poor, as indicated in table 4.5 of this study. This problem is worsened by the fact that there are very few learning materials designed to assist LVL. In most cases they study in the same environment with normal learners, using the same materials and performance is seriously hampered.

4.4 Intervention Measures to Boost Academic Performance of Low Vision Learners

The general poor performance of LVL is a serious problem that needs immediate solutions from all the stakeholders. This is because, as the world grows and as the

population increases, the number of V.I children increases and so the increase in number of LVL.

In this study, the researcher sought to find out the workable solutions to avert the situation (of poor performance of LVL). A number of solutions were identified and respondents including mainly teachers were asked to identify the best, by casting their vote for each and every item as placed in the question. The sub sequent sub sections of this chapter show how respondents reacted to the various solutions.

4.4.1 Provision of Teaching and Learning Resources

Teachers were asked to show the extent to which they agree or disagree that provision of teaching and learning resources, can clearly improve academic performance of V.I learners. Table 4.6 shows a summary of their responses in this regard.

Table 4.6: Whether provision of Teaching and Learning Resources can Improve Academic Performance of LVL

Response	Frequency	Percentage
Strongly agree	5	50%
Agree	5	50%
Disagree	-	-
Strongly disagree	-	-
Un decided	-	-
Total	10	100

Table 4.5 shows that all respondents agree that provision of teaching and learning resources can seriously improve academics performance of LVL. This shows that the

not guided on how to treat these LVL. Consequently, their attitude becomes negative and their performance is hampered.

4.4.5 Assistance from the Government and NGO's

In trying to solve some of the problems faced by LVL, the government of Kenya on several occasions has tried to come out to assist V.I in various ways .Other None Governmental Organization have also tired to assist the LVL financially and socially .The government has tried to modify the learning environment and the curriculum to suit the capabilities of LVL.

The government assistance comes though finance, teaching and Learning aids, equipments and other forms. The researcher has liked to find out the mount assistance and how the aid has been distributed among the schools and whether LVL receive the assistance or not. The Viable sources of this information were the schools and government officials. However due to some problems, many schools did not disclose their budgetary expenses from the government and NGO's. This incapacitated the researcher to make a clear analysis of this aid. However it was noted form the various discussions with different school administrators that this aid reaches schools, but how they are used was not established. It became time consuming for the researcher to design other instruments to collect data on this issue.

CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION

5.0 Introduction

This chapter shows the summary of findings, conclusion taken on each findings and recommendations. The area for further research is also indicated here.

5.1 Summary of Findings

This study discovered that the major causes of V.I among children in the school going age are disease like –Glaucoma, Cataract and exophthalmia and others. These diseases contribute to 60% of V.I cases among children. Other causes of V.I are accidents, heredity etc. The study also discovered that most (70%) of the LVL perform poorly. It is only a few (30%) who can perform averagely. This poor performance is attributed not only to natural inability, but the inability to read the books and what is written on the board.

A number of intervention measures can be under taken to boost academic performance of LVL .All respondents showed that if LVL are provided with teaching learning resources, their performance can be improved. The study also found out that there are few trained SNE teachers and so there a big need for them .In this study , the researcher also discovered that about 80% of the people in the Villages, teachers and other pupils , generally have a negative attitude towards LVL. It is this negative attitude of the many stakeholders that also lowers academic performance of LVL. It is also evident that most schools (80%) rarely conduct guidance and counseling programs at their schools. So LVL and other people like teachers and pupils are not guided on how to handle this problem.

5.2 Conclusion

There are many causes of V.I among children, but diseases are the biggest cause, contributing 60% of V.I cases. LVL perform generally poor in most schools. This is due to negative attitude most people, including teachers and fellow pupils have towards LVL. Other factors that are responsible for poor academic performance of LVL are inadequate teaching and learning resources, inadequate SNE trained teachers and lack of enough support form the Government , NGO's and other take holders. There is generally a poor attitude of most people towards LVL, there are few SNE trained teachers and GCP are still inadequate in most schools. Therefore, there is need to control diseases, so as to reduce LVL, whose problem originates from such diseases.

In order to improve academic performance of LVL, there is need to train more SNE teachers to handle LVL. The Government and other stake holders should provide more teaching and learning resources, guidance and counseling programmes should be increased to create a positive attitude of various stakeholders towards LVL, so that they increase their confidence and thus improve their performance Therefore , there is need to control diseases so to reduce LVL , whose problems originates from such disease in order to improve academic performance of LVL , there is need to train more SNE teachers to handle LVL , the government and other stake holders should provide more teaching learning resources and guidance and counseling programs should be increased to create appositve attitude of various stake holders towards LVL , so that they increase their confidence and thus improve their performance.

5.3 Recommendation

Basing on the findings of this study the researcher recommends that, the government should put up preventive measures to reduce the spread of disease like Glaucoma, Cataracts, Xerophthalmia among others that cause V.I among children. Parents should also be more careful in up bringing their children so that they are not easily attacked by such disease which may cause V.I among their children and impact negatively on their academic careers. Such measures may include immunization programmes, provision of good food that can improve pupil's sight and early control and treatment of the diseases, in case it is discovered. This can be enhanced by the government putting up more hospitals with enough doctors and medicine to treat eye problems.

The ministry of education needs to do something to boost academic performance of LVL. This can be done through provision of more SNE trained teachers, more teaching and learning resources like eye glasses for shortsighted and longsighted. Parents, schools, and the ministry of education should conduct more guidance and counseling sessions to try and encourage LVL to learn. This will also change the negative attitude most people have towards LVL. Other pupils also need to be sensitized so that they change their attitude towards LVL.

5.4 Areas for Further Research

This research report is not conclusive, further studies can be conducted on the factors affecting LVL performance and how can LVL be motivated to improve performance.

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APPENDIX A: INTRODUCTION LETTER



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

Office of the Director

24th April 2008

TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN:

Dear Sir/Madam,

RE: INTRODUCTION LETTER FOR MS/MRS/MR. JOHNSTONE CHESIRE CHELAL

REG. #. BED/13561/G1/DF

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

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

ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE OF LEARNERS WITH
VISUAL IMPAIRMENTS IN KIPSARAMAN

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

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

Yours Faithfully,

MUHWEZI JOSEPH
HEAD, IN-SERVICE

APPENDIX B: ACCEPTANCE LETTER

TOROKWONIN PRIMARY SCHOOL
P.O BOX 104
KABARTONJO
15TH MAY 2008.

THE HEAD OF INSERVICE
KAMPALA INTERNATIONAL UNIVERSITY
INSTITUTE OF OPEN AND DISTANCE LEARNING
P.O BOX 2000
KAMPALA, UGANDA.

Dear Sir/Madam,

RE: ACCEPTANCE LETTER JOHNSTONE C. CHELAL BED/13561/61/DF

The above referenced student teacher studying in KIU is teaching in the above school. He requested to carry out his research study in Kipsaraman Zone, Baringo District, Kenya on academic performance of learners with visual impairments.

I have therefore accorded him all the necessary support required to facilitate his field study. He in turn did his research with utmost cooperation and commitment.

Accord him any assistance he requires.

Thank you.

Yours Faithfully



SYMON T. KIPNGEMUI

HEADTEACHER.

TOROKWONIN PRY. SCHOOL
BOX 104, KABARTONJO.
DATE 15/05/08

APPENDIX B: ACCEPTANCE LETTER

TOROKWONIN PRIMARY SCHOOL
P.O BOX 104
KABARTONJO
15TH MAY 2008.

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The above referenced student teacher studying in KIU is teaching in the above school. He requested to carry out his research study in Kipsaraman Zone, Baringo District, Kenya on academic performance of learners with visual impairments.

I have therefore accorded him all the necessary support required to facilitate his field study. He in turn did his research with utmost cooperation and commitment.

Accord him any assistance he requires.

Thank you.

Yours Faithfully



SYMON T. KIPNGEMUI

HEADTEACHER.

TOROKWONIN PRY. SCHOOL
BOX 104, KABARTONJO.
DATE 15/05/08

APPENDIX C: QUESTIONNAIRES FOR LEARNERS

I am appealing to you to answer all these questions according to the instructions. Do not write your name to ensure complete confidentiality. The information will be used for educational purposes and not for commercial.

1. Please indicate your gender

Male ☐ Female ☐

2. Which is your age bracket?

Below 10 years ☐ 10-13 years ☐ 14-17 years ☐ 18 – 21 years ☐ above 21 ☐

3. How many children in your school have problems of the eyes and are not able to read and write properly?

None ☐ Between 1 – 2 ☐ 3 – 4 ☐ 5 – 6 ☐ 7 – 8 ☐ More than 8 ☐

4. What is the general academic performance of visually impaired learners in your school?

Generally; poor ☐ average ☐ good ☐

5. What kind of assistance has the government provided to visually impaired learners?

Finance ☐ T/L aids ☐ Equipment ☐ Others specify.....

What do you think is the main cause of visual impairments in your school?

Diseases ☐ Accidents ☐ Heredity ☐ Others specify

6. What is the academic level of teachers trained to handle visually Impaired Learners?

Certificate in SNE ☐ Diploma in SNE ☐ Degree in SNE ☐ Others specify.....

How many teachers have been trained to handle visually impaired

None ☐ 1 ☐ 2 ☐ 3 ☐ 4 ☐

7. How often have you been guided and counseled by your teachers?

Once in a week ☐ Once a month ☐ Once a term ☐ Once a year ☐ None ☐

What is the best intervention strategy to support learners with V.I?

Inclusive setting ☐ Hospitalization ☐ Special school ☐ Home care ☐

Others specify.....

.....

APPENDIX C: QUESTIONNAIRES FOR TEACHERS

I am appealing to you to answer all these questions according to the instructions. Do not write your name to ensure complete confidentiality. The information will be used for educational purpose and not for commercial.

1. Please indicate your gender

Male ☐ Female ☐

2. Which is your age bracket?

Below 25 years ☐ 25-30 years ☐ 31 – 40 years ☐ 41 – 50 years ☐ over 51 ☐

3. Are there visually impaired learners in your school? If yes give the Estimate.

Below 5 ☐ 5-10 ☐ More than 10 ☐

How often do you guide and counsel pupils and parents to support

Learners with visual impairments?

Very often ☐ Often ☐ Rarely ☐

4. Do you agree that when learners are provided with appropriate teaching and learning resources, they will improve in their academic performance?

Strongly agree ☐ Agree ☐ Disagree ☐ Strongly disagree ☐

Give reasons to support your answer

(i).....

(ii)

(iii).....

5. Do you agree that visually impaired learners lag behind because parents do not provide support?

Disagree ☐ Agree ☐

Give reasons for parents not providing support

(i)

(ii)

(iii)

6. How often do teachers assess learners with visual impairments in your school?

Very often ☐ Often ☐ Rarely ☐ None ☐

7. State the number of teachers in your school trained to handle V.I learners

1

2

3

4

Other (specify)

8. What is the attitude of other learners towards the visually impaired in your school?

Generally negative

Generally positive

Others (specify)

9. Do you agree that modification of the environment is important to support visually impaired learners in an inclusive setting?

Strongly agree

Agree

Disagree

Strongly disagree

Others (specify)

Give reasons to support your answer

(i)

(ii)

(iii)

