

**CHILDREN WITH MENTAL RETARDATION AND THEIR ACADEMIC
PERFORMANCE**

BY

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IN SPECIAL NEEDS EDUCATION OF KAMPALA

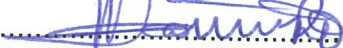
INTERNATIONAL UNIVERSITY

MAY, 2013

DECLARATION

I, Moro Paul do hereby declare that this report is my own original work and has never been submitted to any university for the award of a degree. Any other extra information cited in this report by other scholars has been acknowledged.

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APPROVAL

This is to acknowledge that this work has been under my supervision and is now ready for presentation for the award of a bachelor of education degree in Special needs education of Kampala International University.

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DEDICATION

I dedicate this work to Almighty God who kept me healthy and for his provisions throughout my studies and to all children who are mentally challenged, who face diverse challenges in their struggle to achieve academic excellence.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

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

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ABSTRACT

The purpose of the study was to investigate the academic performance of children with mental retardation. Parents, professionals, and researchers inclusively participated in the study and this also demonstrated a more defined impact of the overall trend carried through the study process. The scope has also been aided by deriving information which would be appropriately reclassified basing on the most appropriate placement for children with mental retardation.

To shed light on the efficacy of integration, several studies were reviewed on the academic and social attainments of school-age children with mental retardation. Results show that children in general education classes do not attain social acceptance of children with mental retardation is low as compared with that of their peers. When comparing children with mental retardation in general education and special education classrooms, integrated students perform better than their comparable segregated students on measures of academic achievement and social competence. Other variables are discussed that might affect child outcomes, and related recommendations are given for future research.

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 things like witchcraft, curse or a punishment from God for wrongs done, (Macmillan, 1982). 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 those duties, responsibilities and expectations pegged on the disabilities, (Alastair, 1989).

The growth of a handicapped child to adulthood in a family is a stressful experience a family can endure. Parental reactions to the realization that their child is exceptional usually include shock, denial, depression, anger and anxiety. Individuals 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 themselves 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 handicapped has placed people as a waste of materials and human resources 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 re very important since it will determine their social and vocational development and adjustment. The researcher will recommend community and the government input to improve the academic performance for the mentally handicapped learners.

In Koboko Town Council, the mentally handicapped learners are taken negatively by 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 peers do not involve them in their outdoor activities such as play, generally conservations and class projects. This leads to withdrawal of the mentally handicapped. They opt to drop out of school. Those who remain are termed by both and peers as low achievers hence perform poorly in various subjects. It is the above that the researcher seeks to examine the factors that affect the education of the mentally handicapped learners in primary schools in Koboko Town Council, Koboko District.

1.2 Statement of the problem

Majority of teachers viewed the mentally challenged learners as pupils who hardly can achieve in class tasks. They are isolated in times of remediation and when giving assignments/homework to the other learners. Their feeling that mentally handicapped learners cannot cope with the pace of the other learners. Learners therefore lagged behind since they are not attended to regardless of their pace in learning among others. Therefore this study attempts to investigate the factors that affect the education of the mentally handicapped learners in primary schools in Koboko District.

1.3 Purpose of the study

The overall purpose of the study was to find the relationship between children with mental retardation and their academic performance in primary schools in Koboko Town Council, Koboko District.

1.4 Research Objectives

- a) To find out the effectiveness of teachers in the education provision available to the mentally handicapped learners.
- b) To identify factors that affects the education of the mentally handicapped learners in Koboko Town Council.
- 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 handicapped learners in Koboko Town Council.
- d) Identify strategies/measures that can be employed to improve on the education of the mentally challenged learners in Koboko town council.

1.5 Research Questions

- a) What is the general effectiveness of teachers in the education provision available to the mentally handicapped learners?
- b) What are the factors affecting the education of the mentally handicapped learners in Koboko Town Council?
- c) What are the role played by parents, teachers and other stakeholders in the provision of learning resources and support services on the education of the mentally handicapped learners in Koboko Town Council?

d) What strategies/measures can be employed to improve on the education of the mentally challenged learners in Koboko town council?

1.6 Scope

Koboko Town Council has a total of 15 schools. However according to this study 9 schools have been sampled for this study. These include Ombachi P/s, Nyarilo P/s, Eden P/s, Apa P/s, Noor P/s, Teremunga P/s, St. Mark Nyarilo P/s, Abele P/s and Koboko P/s.

1.6 Significance of the study

It is hoped that this study would:

- i. Help educators and the government in implementing specific rules of operations and functional procedure in support of children with mental retardation.
- ii. Ensure that education standards for children with mental retardation is put into consideration by all stakeholders and made to be the most important item for child growth and development. It is the foundation of a good citizenship.
- iii. Enable the children with mental retardation to fully appreciate their standards and effectively ensure that they are given the opportunity to get educated.
- iv. Enable the people of Koboko Town Council to get to know the importance of educating mentally handicapped learners in the society, hence elicit positive attitude toward the mentally handicapped learners.
- v. The teachers in the Town Council will use the finding to improve the teaching of the mentally handicapped learners and thus improve the academic performance.

- vi. Ensure that the Education officers will use the research finding to sensitize teachers in the zone through seminars on the importance of educating the mentally handicapped learners in Koboko Town Council. This will also create positive attitude towards the education of mentally handicapped learners. The Ministry of education may use the findings to improve learning provisions by availing funding and providing learning materials to the handicapped to improve their academic performance.

1.7 Limitation of the study

- i. The study would be very important but also very expensive since it involves massive movements. The compilation process as well as typing, printing and binding also involves a lot of money.
- ii. Because of the busy schedules of the supervisor, it was hugely difficult to fully interact with the her while in the process of completing the research.
- iii. Methods such as oral interviews require meeting the respondents in person and these required physical movements. All these were time consuming and expensive.

1.8 Delimitations of the Study

- i. Since the research had a well focused interaction with the community, getting permission to carry out the research was quite easy.
- ii. The means of transport from one school to another was made simple by the local school as transport was provided.
- iii. The cost of the project was greatly reduced because the quantity of work printed as well as the costs required for accommodation was gathered for by the school and other people.

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.0 Introduction

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

2.1 General Overview on Mental Retardation

Most mental handicaps are as a result of biology, 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 effort to handle children with special needs because there is a life of getting over hurdles every day. 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 have 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 their 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 uses learning tools as play objects. This has led to the teachers being frustrated and causes the child to be 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 teacher 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 educational officers avoiding to carry out inspection in special education programme 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 not give him/her challenging work. This makes the learner give up trying as his/her efforts are not appreciated. Some School administrators and policy makers in education feel that it is improper to 'waste' scarce resources 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 life-long education to exist independently in the world after school.

2.1.1 Teaching strategies and classroom management

According to Marland (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 extra-ordinary things that the other one will not dare to do, 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 teachers have not been able to observe individual pupils 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 educational materials than a disorderly, cluttered classroom. Any orderly classroom will have specific centers for certain learning activities. The mentally challenged learners are in this way able to learn from designated areas in the classroom. The areas are known as learning centers which the teachers rarely have 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

According to Hiuhi (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 others 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 ratio 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 resources useless. Lack of finances is a major setback in the acquisition of educational resources for many schools particularly those in rural areas. Through sponsorship, some special schools for the mentally challenged have been able to acquire high technological resources. Despite this, most teachers are generally not given training opportunities 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 early. 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 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, film-strip/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 mentally handicapped children. However, these items of equipment are all expensive and beyond reach of 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 Putter (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 kinds 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 class families have no time for the mentally 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 kept 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 mental challenged child since they themselves could have little or no education.

2.2.2 Wrong choice of education provision / school

According to Tickel (1980, P. 16), parents are regally 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. Buildings, classrooms, timetable and educational processes are structured 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 to parental choose that syllabus as, teaching methods and the ways by which each school implements the curriculum of the mentally challenged be made reading 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 grow 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 a 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 educators 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 nonprofessional teacher (parent) which should not be the case. This is because it's incapability 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 it's 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 do not reinforce these early learning behaviors, the behaviors can be viewed by the challenged children as not very important and gradually decrease. 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.

2.2.4 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. Teachers; liaison with parents has been regarded as optional or an extra favor 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 handicapped 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 have-not kept the curriculum under review to cater for the mentally challenged children. An opportunity for dialogue between parents and teachers with regard to the curriculum is 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 parents feel they should not educate the mentally challenged children. 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 handicapped 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 a 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 pre-vocational and vocational curriculum. Others are dependant which means they need custodial care. Regardless of the classification system used definitions and eligibility criteria can be operationalized 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 operationalize the definition and eligibility criteria through established procedure.

2.3.1 Residential School

This is a special school that accommodates children with a specific type of handicap 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 Schools

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 Karatinas Special School among others.

2.3.3 Special units

According to Waruguru (2002), this is a classroom that is located in a regular school but is set aside for educating learners with specific type of disability. It is usually manned by specialist teacher who is responsible for the learners' activities. They are established by the Ministry of Education and Sports as a move towards integration.

2.3.4 Mainstream Programmers

These are programmers where children with mental handicap learn together with non-mentally handicapped. The aim at keeping children within their community and allow them to attend classes with the 'normal' counter parts. They do not demand changes in curricular provision. They follow the school system. The handicaps 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 main stream programmed 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 resources rooms.

CHAPTER THREE

METHODOLOGY

3.0 Introduction

The main purpose of this study was to find out the factors affecting the education of the mentally handicapped learners in Koboko Town Council, Koboko District. In this section the researcher will apply the following methods and techniques.

3.1 Research Design

A case study design employing both qualitative and quantitative techniques was used. This design is chosen as appropriate because the study is to investigate the relationship between children with mental retardation and their academic performance in Koboko, Northern Uganda.

The researcher also chose this design because the case study that was applied was suitable for intensive investigations and analysis of a single phenomenon structure or the group being studied.

3.2 Sample

The target population will comprised of 9 regular schools in Koboko Town Council, Koboko District. The sample size comprised 36 teachers, 16 Females teacher and 16 males. The researcher used simple random sampling to select the participants from the 15 schools. Each school I selected three.

3.3 Procedure

The researcher selected 9 schools female and male teachers from each school.

The researcher sought permission to carry out the study in the schools and the institutions to brief the sample size that was 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 specifically and education of mentally handicapped learners and they are handled by teachers at school participants. The researcher subdivided Koboko Town Council into three wards which are Malenga, Apa and Mengo Ward.

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 was 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 he is the only one under taking this kind of research in the rural school consultation was 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 hindered the research to be fully, successfully and effectively.

CHAPTER FOUR

PRESENTATION AND ANALYSIS OF DATA COLLECTED

4.0 Introduction

The study reveals various factors related to the education of the mentally handicapped learners in primary schools in Koboko Town Council, Koboko District. The schools studied included Ombachi P/s, Nyarilo P/s, Eden P/s), Apa P/s, Noor P/s, Teremunga P/s, St. Mark Nyarilo P/s, Abele P/s and Koboko P/s.

4.1 Factors Affecting Education of the Mentally Handicapped

Learners in Koboko Town Council

Respondents of the questionnaires were teachers in Koboko Town Council from Malenga Ward schools (Ombachi P/s, Nyarilo P/s, and Eden P/s), Apa Ward schools (Apa P/s, Noor P/s and Teremunga P/s), and Mengo Ward schools (St. Mark Nyarilo P/s, Abele P/s and Koboko P/s).

4.1.1 Response of the questionnaires

Table one show 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

Wards	Number sent out	Number Received
Malenga	12	08
Apa Ward	12	10
Mengo Ward	12	09

Total	36	27
Percentage	100	80%

Source: Primary data

4.1.2 Working experience

Table 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 handicapped in Koboko Town Council.

Table 2: Shows the working experience of the respondents

Age	Frequency	Percentage
5-10 years	05	20%
11-15 years	08	30%
16-20 years	11	40%
21-years and above	03	10%
Total	27	100%

Source: primary data

In this item the researcher wanted to establish the working experience of the teachers he was working with. The table shows that majority of the respondents were teachers who had worked for a long time 40% of them have 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	09	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 handicapped in Koboko Town Council, Koboko 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
Grade 3	12	44%
Diploma	09	33%
Degree	04	15%
Masters	02	08%
Total	27	100%

Source: primary data

Table 5: Number of the trained teachers

Response	Frequency	Percentage
Nil	17	46%
One	07	26%
Two	06	20%
Above	03	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 make teachers who handle children who are mentally challenged and others with learning difficulties face more challenges in struggle to achieve quality education. This because they do not have the skills to handle learners with special needs.

4.1.5 Effectiveness of teaches in Education provision for Mentally handicapped learners

The research sought to establish whether there are teachers who have effective knowledge regarding specific knowledge about education provision for mentally handicapped learners. Table 6 shows that relatively a good number of respondents have no information about special education programme. This is represented by 70% only 30% had information about special education programmes This shows 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 handicapped and others with different disabilities.

Table 6: Shows Information about special education programme

Response	Frequency	Percentage
Yes	08	30%
No	19	70%
Total	27	100%

Source: primary data

4.1.6 Factors that affect the education of the mentally handicapped learners in Koboko Town County

The factors that are affecting the education of the mentally handicapped learners have been defined in the study. From 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%, 46% from the colleague and 18% learnt through incidental.

Table 7: Respondents are trained on special need education

Response	Frequency	Percentage
Media	04	16%
Colleague	12	46%
Incidental	05	18%
Seminars	06	20%
Total	27	100%

Source: primary data

Table 8: Establishment of units

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

Source: primary data

According to the data majority of the respondents recorded that most schools have not established units. But few have 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 means score based. The teacher has therefore no time for the learners with special needs.

41.7 Establishing the role played by parents, teachers and other stakeholders in the provision of services

The role played by parents was fully analyzed and it was observed in the study that the overall research show important connection between teachers and stakeholders in service provision. This was an open ended item where the researcher intended to find out the extent to which the respondents understand the concept of mental retardation.

Although each of the respondents had their own way of defining the term most of them representing 75% understood what it is some explained it as brain dysfunction, a disease affecting the brain lack of mental reasoning and understanding a delay or 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.

4.18 Identifying strategies employed to improve education of the mentally retarded

The researcher used this item to know whether the respondents support and value education of an Individual who is mentally challenged. There are several strategies which aid the education of the mentally retarded students.

Table 9: Strategies analysis

Response	Frequency	Percentage
No	18	67%
Yes	09	33%
Total	27	100%

Source: primary data

The data collected is analyzed in the table (9) 67% support the teacher-learner strategies. There is need to educate learners who are mentally handicapped. The strategies include improved relationship between them and their educational standards.

33% of the respondents believed that by fully developing equipment for the mentally disabled then the goal would be fully achieved. They admitted that education of the mentally handicapped would help the society. They had feeling that education will develop them hence making them self-reliant.

4.1.9 Community value on education of mentally handicapped

The research proved that community does not value education of mentally handicapped learners. They feel it is waste of materials and human

resources. This is backed by the below table (10) from the findings, parent value educating other children than the mentally handicapped.

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

Response	Frequency	Percentage
Yes	05	22%
No	21	78%
Yes	27	100%

Source: primary data

4.1.10 Difficulties in communication

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

Findings from the 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 cannot communicate easily.

Table 11: Difficulties in education

Response	Frequency	Percentage
Yes	20	63%
No	07	37%
Total	27	100%

Source: primary data

4.11. Education resources

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 resources

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

Source: primary data

CHAPTER FIVE
DISCUSSION, SUMMARY, CONCLUSION AND
RECOMMENDATIONS.

5.0 Introduction

The study aimed at examining the factors that affect education of mentally handicapped learners in primary schools in Koboko Town Council, Koboko District. 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 children who are mentally handicapped.

5.1 Summary of findings and their relevancy

The education of the mentally retarded can be achieved through a well guided approach and this also ensures that important factors necessitating education of mentally retarded children would be well guided by aided educational values. From the analysis, it is observed that mental retardation is widely understood by majority of the teachers in primary schools in the Town Council. The teachers are not able to handle these pupils well. Their teaching approaches do not favors 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 on 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, (Alastair, 1989; Macmillan, 1982)

However, as a measure of academic performance, teacher-given grades have well-known limitations. Grade inflation can make comparison of grades across time suspect, variations in grading standards across schools and individual teachers can make it difficult to compare populations meaningfully, and grading standards differ significantly between special education and regular education classes. For example, special education teachers are less likely than general educators to consider homework or attendance to be important in grading student performance, but they are more likely to consider in-class participation to be important (Cameto, Marder, & Guzman, 2003).

They do not involve them in any activity at home which lowers their self-esteem. This tallies with Bennett'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 parents and the general public seems not 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 Koboko Town Council 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 have a lower mean scores in the teaching 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 the fact that teacher/pupil ration, the teacher has not made to tap the talents that they may have and assist to improve them. The developing of a talent is what would enable them live independently 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 Town Council is also problem noted. This has led to lack of high technological materials that are vital in the teaching of mentally handicapped.

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. The illiterate do not find even the need of taking them to school. 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 helpers 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 provisions established in the Town Council like the units are not

adequately utilized. These are some of the reason of the reason why the education of the mentally challenged lags behind in the Town Council and the district.

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

The researcher encountered financial problems, in transport from one school to other and shortage of time since the schedule in his school is very tight.

5.3 Conclusion

The information gathered and analyzed denotes that the teachers in the schools have experience since they 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 leave them to stay at home under the care of house helpers.

The researcher therefore concludes that through seminars and guidance and counseling the stake holders in the education of the mentally challenged would be enlighten.

5.4 Recommendations

The purpose of the study was to find out the factors that affect the education of the mentally handicapped in Koboko Town Council. From the discussion, the researcher came up with recommendations as possible remedies to improve the performance.

- i. Parental involvement on 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 talents of their children 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/pupil ration. It should also provide funds to purchase high technological materials to make the teacher work easy. It should also provide funds to finance the teachers so that they are enlightened on the importance of the education of the mentally challenged.
- iii. The community at large should be involved on the education of these children. lot of emphasis should be put in involving the children in societal activities to boost their self-esteem. This would also enable the children realize their talents hence making them self-reliant.
- iv. The teachers should take the mentally retarded positively. Moderation of teacher/pupil ration 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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APPENDICES

APPENDIX A: QUESTIONNAIRE

SECTION A

Introduction

Name: Moro Paul

Gender: Male

Kampala International University

Background information

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

5- 10years ☐ 16-10 years ☐

11-15 years ☐ 21years and above ☐

2. Gender?

Male ☐ Female ☐

3. Education qualification?

Grade 3 ☐ Diploma ☐

Degree ☐ Masters ☐

SECTION B

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

Nil ☐ One ☐ Two ☐

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 handicapped learners trained?

Yes ☐

No ☐

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

Yes ☐

No ☐

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

Yes ☐

No ☐

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

Yes ☐

No ☐

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

Yes ☐

No ☐

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

Yes ☐

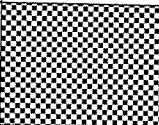
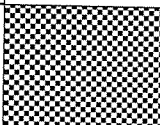
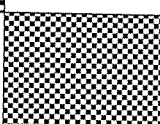
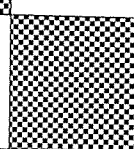
No ☐

11. Do you provide educational resource for the mentally handicapped learners in your school?

Yes ☐

No ☐

APPENDIX B: THE TIME FRAME OF THE STUDY

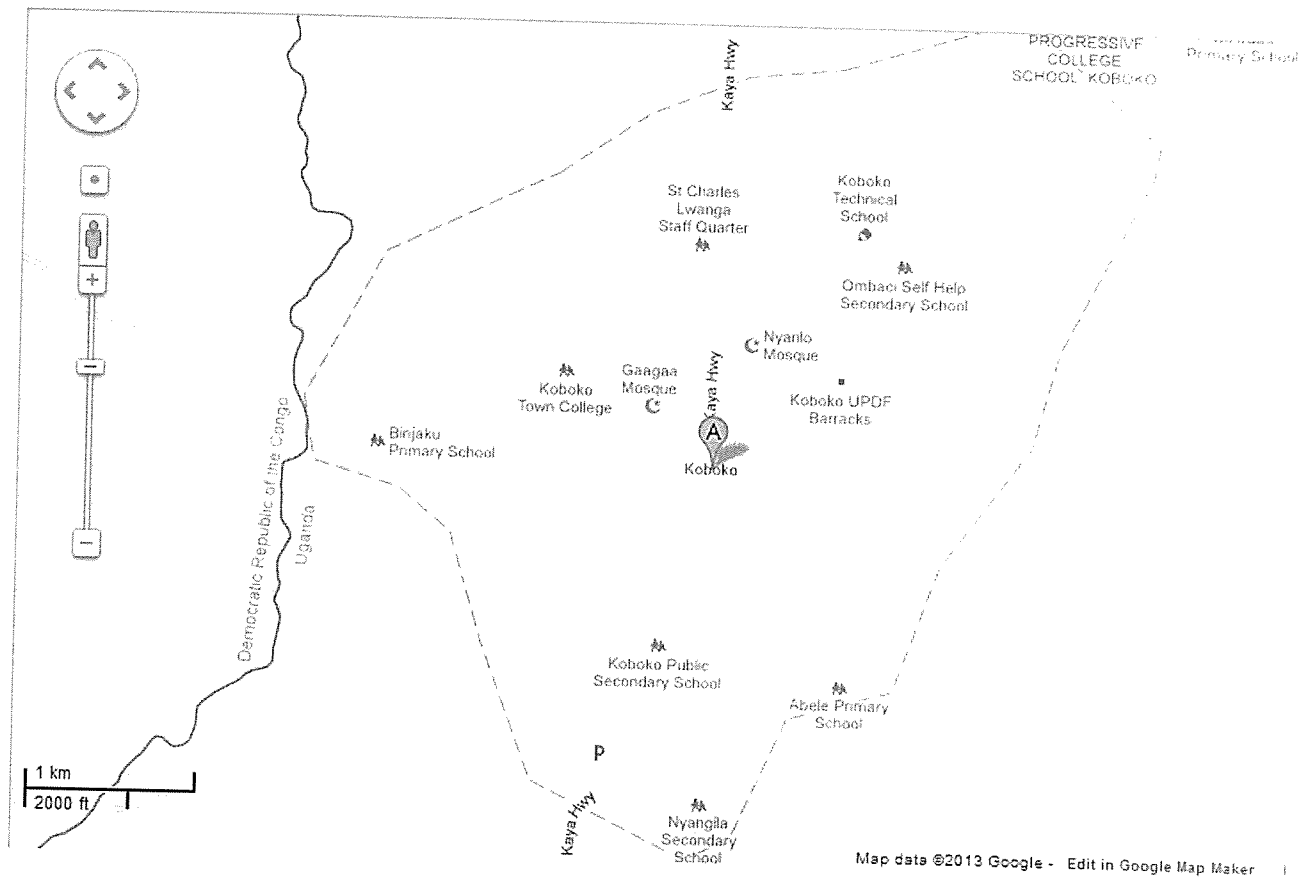
Activity	Time in months			
	1	2	3	4
Proposal writing				
Data collection				
Data analysis				
Submission				

APPENDIX C: BUDGET OF THE STUDY

Item	Amount in Uganda shillings
Typing & printing	50,000
Air time	10,000
Transportation	70,000
Stationery	10,000
Accommodation and Food	160,000
Literature Collection	50,000
Miscellaneous	100,000
Total	450,000

APPENDIX D: MAP OF KOBOKO

THE MAP SHOWING THE STUDY AREA



Note: Some primary schools were not captured by the map but are within the dotted framework.