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Assessment of the Availability of Facilities for Physically Challenged Pupils in Primary Schools in Kericho County

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Abstract: Inclusion of the physically challenged learners in public primary schools has been quite a challenge as many of these children are still at home and have attained school going age while some have even passed the school going age. The purpose of this study was to assess the availability of facilities for physically challenged pupils in public primary schools in Kericho County. Lev Vygotsky Social-Cultural Constructivism Theory informed the study. The study utilized a descriptive survey design. The objective of the study was to establish the availability of facilities for physically challenged pupils in public primary schools. Mixed research methods was employed. The target population was composed of 214 teachers, 2395 pupils, 14 head teachers and one District Quality Assurance and Standards Officer (DQASO). A sample size size of 360 pupils, 42 teachers, five head teachers and one DQASO were used. Purposive, stratified and simple random sampling techniques were used to select the study sample. The data collection instruments used were the questionnaire, interviews and observations. Spearman rank order correlation was then used to compute the correlation coefficient in order to establish the reliability of the instrument .The instrument got a coefficient of 0.87. Data were analysed using the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) computer programme and presented using tables, pie charts, bar graphs, frequencies and percentages to form part of the descriptive statistics. The study found that many of the public primary schools do not have the facilities for the physically challenged pupils. Facilities like ramps were not available since 38 (90.4%) teachers and 308 (95.5%) pupils disagreed. The recommendation is that the government should provide facilities for the physically challenged pupils like ramps, transport and boarding facilities in public primary schools. This will therefore make public primary schools inclusive to all learners. **Keywords:** Assessment, Facilities, Physically challenged pupils and inclusive education

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I. INTRODUCTION

Many countries are far from having reached the goals established at the World Conference on Education for All (EFA), according to the World Education Forum in Dakar, which was in Senegal (UNESCO, 2000). African Charter on Human and Peoples Right (ACHP, 1990), Article 13 (3) states that every individual shall has the right of access to public property and services in strict equality of all persons before the law. This is echoed by the Kenya Constitution, (2010) in Chapter Four on Bill of Rights, that states that basic, education is a fundamental human right and that a person with any disability is entitled access educational institutions and facilities.

Physically challenged pupils feel excluded in public primary schools and those learning in inclusive schools still feel excluded because the facilities available in these schools are quite challenging. It was from this background that the study sought to establish the availability of facilities for the physically challenged pupils in public primary schools in Kericho County.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study was to assess the availability of facilities for the physically challenged pupils in public primary schools public primary schools in Kericho County, Kenya.

Objective

The objective of the study was to assess the availability of facilities for the physically challenged pupils in public primary schools.

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II. LITERATURE REVIEW

Aseka (2013) posits that the concept of inclusive education focuses on the school environment and its barriers. It perceives the impediments in mainstream education and school environment as challenges faced by children with disabilities. The inclusive education approach seeks to 'fix' the school system to accommodate the learning of children with disabilities. According to Ogola (2010) schools that cater for children with special needs are few and not well distributed. Children cannot therefore access them; especially where they need to travel and cannot afford the fare. The success of any inclusive school is influenced by the availability of facilities for the physically challenged pupils. Krohn- Nyada (2008) contends that inadequate facilities and poor infrastructure are some barriers to inclusion.

UNESCO (2011), argues that majority of schools are inaccessible to many learners, especially learners with physical disabilities particularly in rural areas, the schools are often inaccessible largely because buildings are run down or poorly maintained and therefore unhealthy and unsafe for all learners. A Study done by Nyende (2012) observed that non-adaptability of the schooling environment contravenes Uganda's obligations as regards the right to education. In the current environment, education for CwDs is neither acceptable nor accessible, which is a further violation of the right to education. Studies done by Najjingo (2009) in Mijwala sub- district, Ssembabule district in Uganda revealed that the availability of facilities in public primary schools is the major challenge facing implementation of all-inclusive schools.

A study done by Buhere and Ochieng (2013) unearth that schools had inadequate resources and that the few resources available were inappropriate and, therefore, could not be effectively used in inclusive schools in Kenya. According to a study done Agbenyega (2007) in Ghana, the classrooms were inaccessible to learners in wheel chairs and were overcrowded. A study done by Majinge and Stilwell (2013) in Tanzania pointed out that layout for library buildings did not allow special needs learners to access these buildings. They did not have functional lifts or ramps to enable these learners reach upper floors where libraries were located.

According to Haddad (2009), stairs are often the first barrier for many children and adults to access schools or other public buildings and enjoy the services these facilities have to offer. According to studies by Patrick (2013) and Ndhlovu (2008), there were no ramps, no rails along the corridors in many primary schools in Rigoma division, Nyamira County, Kenya and Zambia respectively. Muga (2003) contends that Educational Assessment and resource center in Kenya have some of the objective like equalizing education opportunities for children with special needs and facilitating their full integration into school system and the community. A study done by Ajwang, Wamukukoya and Simiyu (2010) in Joyland special school revealed that physical education is effective in improving the health related fitness of pupils with physical disabilities.

Buhere, Ndiku and Kindiki (2014) and Patrick (2013) found out that most classrooms were not spacious in many schools in Kenya. Doors in most school buildings did not allow wheel chairs to pass. A study done by Buhere et al. (2014) and Nthia (2012) unearth that many primary schools lack spacious desks and well-designed toilets for the physically challenged pupils. Mukhopadhyay, Johnson and Abosi (2012) and Odongo (2012) observed that majority of the classrooms in primary schools were inaccessible to learners with physical disabilities. Although some schools had ramps, some of the ramps were too steep for students with physical disabilities to use them independently. Necessary facilities such as toilets were inaccessible. The study established the availability of the facilities for the physically challenged pupils in public primary schools in Kericho Municipality Zone, Kericho County.

Methodology Participants

All the participants were selected from public primary schools. A sample of 360 pupils, 42 teachers, five head teachers and one DQASO were used. Simple random sampling was used to select the schools, which formed part of the study. The study used purposive of class six and seven to capture information from more informed group of learners. Simple random sampling techniques were used to select the study sample (Mugenda & Mugenda, 2011). Simple random sampling was used to pick the males and females teachers, boys, and girls from each stratum. Lottery method was applied to choose teachers and pupils of either gender. Purposively sampling was used to select head teachers and the DQASO. To enable the study to get information on the availability of facilities for the physically challenged pupils in public primary schools public primary, a questionnaire was used to collect data from teachers and pupils, interview guide was used on the head teachers and the DQASO. The researcher also used observation method to collect some information

Availability of Facilities

The objective of this study was to assess the availability of facilities for physically challenged pupils in primary schools in Kericho County. To achieve this objective, research question was generated. 'Which facilities are available for the physically challenged pupils in the primary schools in Kericho County?' The teachers and pupils respondents were asked to respond to a number of items in the questionnaire. These included the accessibility of the schools, availability of ramps, availability of separate toilets for boys and girls,

spacious classrooms, availability of wheel chairs, availability of well-designed doors and availability of facilities for physical education for physically challenged pupils. The data related to the objective are presented below.

Accessibility of the School to the Physically Challenged Pupils

Teachers' responses on the accessibility of the school to the physically challenged pupils was sought and the findings are shown in Table 1.

Table 1 Accessibility of the School to the Physically Challenged Pupils (n =42)

Responses	Number of Teachers	Percentage
Agree	08	29.0
Undecided	02	4.8
Disagree	33	76.2
Total	42	100

Source: Author (2018)

The results in Table 1 indicate that a few, 8 (29.0%) agreed that the primary schools are accessible, only 2 (4.8%) were undecided, a majority, 33 (76.2%) disagreed. According to the observation schedule, 2 (40.0%) schools had accessible roads whereas 3 (60.0%) of the school visited were inaccessible to the physically challenged pupils especially during the rainy seasons as they were not tarmacked. Some teachers' respondents mentioned that some physically challenged pupils operated from more than two kilometers from the public primary school. This results concurs with UNESCO (2011) observation which mentioned that majority of the schools are inaccessible to many learners especially the physically challenged. These findings also mirrors the study done by Najjingo (2009) which revealed that inaccessibility of the school is due to poor roads during rainy seasons and the long distances from their homes. This compromised the inclusiveness of most public primary schools in Mijwala sub- district Ssembabule district in Uganda.

The small percentage of teachers who agreed that the schools are accessible 8 (29.0%) cannot also be ignored since 2 (40.0%) of the schools visited were just by the road side hence quite accessible since the roads were tarmacked especially for pupils who came from near the school. From these findings, it is therefore clear that majority of the physically challenged pupils could not attend public primary schools because of their inaccessibility limiting their mobility.

Availability of Ramps for the Physically Challenged Learners

The study sought to establish whether the public primary schools had ramps to allow physically challenged pupils access-learning facilities. The findings of the teachers' responses have been summarized in Table 2.

Table 2 Teachers' responses on the Availability of Ramps (n = 42)

Responses	Number	Percentage
Agree	04	9.6
Undecided	-	-
Disagree	38	90.4
Total	42	100.0

Source: Author (2018)

Table 2 revealed that, only 4 (9.6%) of the teachers respondents agreed that ramps were available in their schools and a majority, 38 (90.4%) disagreed. None of the respondents was undecided.

Table 3 Pupils responses on the Availability of Ramps (n = 360)

Response	Number of Pupils	Percentage
Agree	52	14.5
Undecided	-	-
Disagree	308	95.5
Total	360	100.0

Source: Author (2018)

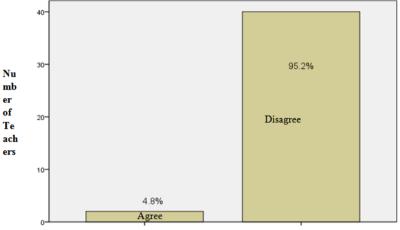
The findings in Table 3 revealed that a few, 52 (14.4 %) of the pupils respondents agreed that there are ramps in their schools, a majority, 308 (95.5%) disagreed. According to the head teachers' interview only 1 (20.0%) mentioned that the school had ramps and the majority, 4 (80.0%) said there were no ramps.

These findings tallied with the observation made by the researcher, only 1 (20.0%) school visited had ramps; however these ramps did not meet the requirements of the MOE. The number of schools which did not have ramps was 4 (80.0%).

These results confirm a study done by Najjingo (2009) that a few schools with new buildings had ramps but the old buildings had no ramps. This finding also mirrors with the studies of Buhere et al. (2014), Patrick (2013), Majinge and Stilwell (2013) and Ndhlovu (2008) who found out that most schools did not have ramps. From these results, availability of ramps as a means of accessing learning facilities has remained a crucial factor that has impacted negatively on the implementation of inclusive education in public primary schools and this may have led to enrollment of few special needs pupils in regular primary schools since their mobility has been limited by lack of ramps.

Separate Toilets for Boys and Girls for the Physically Challenged Children

The study established if there are separate toilets for boys and girls for the physically challenged pupils from pupils and teachers responses. Summary of the findings are in Fig. 1 and Fig. 2.



Response Fig 1 Availability of Separate Toilets for Physically Challenges Pupils (n = 42)

The findings in Fig 1 shows that a few, 2 (4.8%) of the teachers agreed that physically challenged pupils had separate toilets for boys and girls and a majority, 40 (95.2%) disagreed. None were undecided. Pupils' response on the availability of separate toilets for boys and girls for physically challenged pupils are shown in Fig 2.

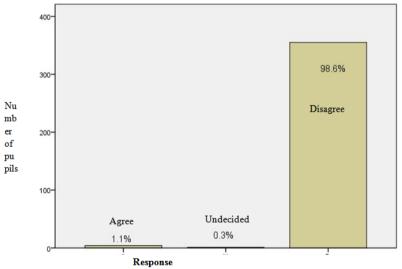


Fig.2 Availability of Separate Toilets for Physically Challenges Pupils (n = 360)

The results in Fig. 3 shows that, out of 360 pupils, a few 4 (1.1%) agreed that there are separate toilets for boys and girls for physically challenged pupils, only1 (0.3%) was undecided and a majority, 355 (98.6%) disagreed. The findings on Fig 1 and 2 concurs with the study of Patrick (2013) and Nthia (2012) where majority of the schools did not have well adapted toilets. This make the special needs pupils feel uncomfortable in regular primary schools as their physiological needs are not well catered for since the toilets were not well designed for them. In one of the schools visited, it was observed that a toilet, which used to be for staff

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members, was assigned to a boy who had major physical challenges since other special needs children could at least share the toilets with the regular pupils.

This showed that the administration was concerned about these groups of learners. This school also had the highest number of physically challenged pupils compared to other schools visited. Four of the other schools visited did not have modified toilets for boys and girls for the physically challenged pupils. The results concur with what the head teachers said in the interview. From these findings, it is clear that the physically challenged pupils shared toilets with the regular pupils, which were not well designed to meet their needs. This therefore made the schools to be unfriendly to this category of pupils.

Spaciousness of the Classrooms

Responses on the spaciousness of the classrooms for the physically challenged pupils have been summarized in Table 4 and Table 5.

Table 4: Spaciousness of the Classroom for the Physically Challenged Pupils (n =42)

Responses	Frequency	Percentage
Agree	11	26.2
Undecided	-	-
Disagree	31	73.8
Total	42	100.0

Source: Author (2018)

The findings in Table 4 indicate that a good number, 11 (26.2 %) of the teachers respondents agreed that the classrooms were spacious enough for the physically challenged pupils; none of the teachers was undecided. A majority of the teachers, 31 (73.8%) disagreed.

Table 5: Spaciousness of the Classrooms for the Physically Challenged Pupils (n = 360)

Response	Number of Pupils	Percentage
Agree	107	29.8
Undecided	-	-
Disagree	253	70.2
Total	360	100.0

Source: Author (2018)

The results in Table 5 revealed that a good number, 107 (29.8%) of the pupils agreed that the classrooms were spacious, none were undecided and a majority, 253 (70.2%) disagreed. The results reveal that teachers' and pupils' responses were quite similar. From the observation made by the researcher, 2 (40.0%) had spacious classrooms and 3 (60.0%) were packed. These findings agree with the findings of Buhere et al. (2014) and Patrick (2013) which echoed that majority of the classrooms were not spacious to allow free movement of the physically challenged pupils.

The findings also concur with what Mukhopadhyay et al. (2012) and Odongo (2012) who confirmed that the classrooms are inaccessible to learners with wheel chairs and are overcrowded due to high number of pupils per class. Similarly, the same observation was also echoed by Agbenyega (2007). This therefore makes it difficult for the physically challenged pupils to interact with the regular pupils. This therefore makes it difficult for the physically challenged pupils to learn from the regular pupils especially when they are developing problem solving skills. This therefore reveals that the movement of the physically challenged pupils in the classrooms is limited by the unavailability of space in the public primary schools.

Availability of Wheel Chairs

The study established whether the wheel chairs were available in public primary schools for the physically challenged pupils. The results of the teachers' respondents have been summarized in Figure 3.

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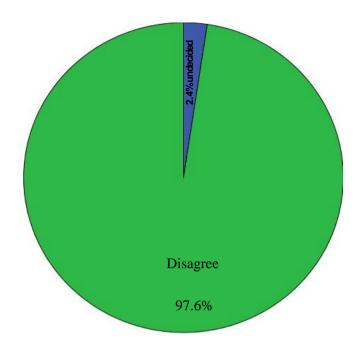


Fig. 3 Teachers' responses on Availability of Wheel Chairs (n = 42)

The results in Fig. 3 reveals that majority of the teachers, and 41 (97.6%) disagreed that wheel chairs are available for the physically challenged pupils and only 1(2.4%) teacher was undecided. During the study, no wheel chair was observed in the visited schools. This therefore confirmed the results.

It emerged from the interview with the DQASO that whenever there was need of wheel chairs, they are sourced from the Educational Assessment Resource Centre (EARC), which is situated at Kericho County headquarters. Many teachers in the public primary schools are not aware of the availability of this facility at the County headquarters.

According to Muga (2003), one of the key functions of the EARC has been providing links with other service providers to support some of the children in need like getting wheel chairs. It is therefore very necessary for the MOE officers to sensitize the head teachers, teachers and caregivers on the availability of this facility in their County headquarters. This will help to improve the mobility of the physically challenged pupils and reduce the cost of purchasing these wheel chairs by their parents. It will also make the public primary schools to be indiscriminative against the physically challenged pupils therefore becoming inclusive. The above findings on the availability of facilities for the physically challenged pupils concur with those of Krohn-Nyada (2008) who reported that the development of inclusive education in Tanzanian primary schools was characterized by inadequate facilities and poor infrastructure.

Doors are well Designed for the Physically Challenged Pupils

Teachers' responses on whether the doors were well designed for the physically challenged pupils in the public primary schools was sought. The results are revealed as shown in Table 6.

Table 6 Doors are well Designed for the Physically Challenged Pupils (n = 42)

Responses	Number of Teachers	Percentage
Agree	09	21.5
Undecided	01	2.4
Disagree	32	76.2
Total	42	100.0

Source: Author (2018)

The findings in Table 6 shows that a few teachers, 9 (21.5%) agreed that the doors were well designed for easy mobility of the physically challenged pupils, only 1 (2.4%) was undecided and a majority, 32 (72.2%) disagreed. According to the observation of the researcher, none of the schools visited had well designed doors for the physically challenged pupils. This findings concur with a study by Patrick (2013) and Ndhlovu (2008) who observed that doors in most school buildings did not allow wheel chairs to pass implying that, there is a

challenge to the stake holders and the MOE to ensure that the current building standards are adhered to in all the learning institutions so as to be inclusive to all the special needs pupils and teachers.

Facilities of the Physically Challenged Pupils for Physical Education

The teachers were asked to give their opinion if physically challenged pupils have facilities to participate in physical education. Table 7 gives a summary of the teachers' responses.

Table 7
Facilities of Physically Challenged Pupils for Physical Education (n=42)

Responses	Number of Teachers	Percentage
Agree	02	4.8
Undecided	-	-
Disagree	40	95.3
Total	42	100

Source: Author (2018)

Responses on Table 7 shows that only 2 (4.8%) teachers' respondents agreed that pupils with physical challenges have facilities to participate in physical education and a majority, 40 (95.3%) disagreed. From the findings of Table 4.16, it is clear that physically challenged pupils have not been catered for in terms of facilities for physical education.

The importance of physical education to the physically challenged pupils has not been catered for in public primary schools. Ajwang et al. (2010) in Joyland special school study revealed that physical education is effective in improving the health related fitness of pupils with physical `ldisabilities. There is need therefore to provide physically challenged pupils facilities for physical education.

III. SUMMARY OF THE FINDINGS

The study established that high number of teachers disagreed that schools were accessible to the physically challenged pupils. The infrastructure in terms of the accessible road was a limiting factor to the physically challenged pupils. On the side of the ramps, majority of the teachers and pupils agreed that ramps were not available in their schools. This therefore means that physically challenged pupils could not access many facilities in these schools making their learning difficult. The findings on whether separate toilets were available which were designed for the physically challenged pupils revealed that majority of the teachers and the pupils disagreed with the statement. Most teachers and pupils disagreed that the classrooms were spacious. This therefore limited the free movement of the physically challenged pupils.

These pupils could therefore not interact with the regular pupils. The results revealed that all the teachers disagreed that the public primary schools had wheel chairs for the physically challenged pupils. The results established that most teachers disagreed with the statement that the doors are well designed for the physically challenged pupils. The findings on availability of facilities for physically challenged pupils shows that most teachers disagreed with the statement. From these findings it is clear that the public primary schools in Kericho Municipality Zone do not have facilities to cater for the physically challenged pupils.

IV. CONCLUSIONS

The study found that the facilities like ramps, wheel chairs, physical education facilities, spacious desks and classrooms were lacking in public primary schools. The physically challenged pupils could therefore not access many facilities in the public schools. This is because their mobility was limited due to lack of these facilities.

V. RECOMMENDATIONS

- I. The government should ensure that there is a policy on provision of facilities for special needs pupils in all public primary schools to enable these pupils' access facilities in these schools.
- II. The government should recommit herself to UPE and EFA by complying with the world declarations on SNE and revisiting the constitution of Kenya 2010.
- III. The Ministry of Education should revisit the Kenya Constitution in ensuring that persons with disabilities have access to educational institutions and facilities

- IV. Ministry of Education should ensure that persons with disabilities are integrated into society
- V. The government should ensure that public primary schools are accessible to the physically challenged pupils by providing means of transport.

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