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RESEARCH ARTICLE

CHALLENGES FACING THE GIFTED AND TALENTED LEARNERS WITH HEARING IMPAIRMENT IN INCLUSIVE EDUCATION PROGRAMMES IN KENYA

^{1,*}Zedekia Onyango Okoth, ²Dr. Charles Makori Omoke and ²Dr. Washington O. Wachianga

¹St. Joseph's Technical Institute for the Deaf. P.O. Box 33--40601, Bondo, Kenya

²Jaramogi Oginga Odinga University of Science and Technology in Kenya

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ABSTRACT

Inclusive education programmes for learners with special needs and disabilities are advocated for by international and national policy documents. However the existence of the gifted and talented learners who are hearing impaired in inclusive education programmes has had minimal attention. It was against that background that this paper was drawn to establish challenges facing inclusive education programmes for gifted and talented learners who are hearing impaired in Kenya. The study was guided by Critical Theory and it employed mixed methods approach. The research design was Concurrent Triangulation. The target population was 1 Principal, 28 teachers and 208 learners in a technical institution, 1 National Council for Persons with Disabilities officer, 2 Quality Assurance and Standards officers and 3 Educational Assessment and Research Center officers purposively sampled in Siaya County, Kenya. The research instruments were; interview schedule, questionnaire, focus group discussion, and observation checklist. The reliability of the research tools was ascertained through test-retest and was calculated using Pearson's correlation coefficient (r) to establish the extent to which the content of the instruments was consistent in eliciting the same responses to determine reliability of the research instruments. Content validity of the instruments was checked by experts who were my supervisors at Jaramogi Oginga Odinga University of Science and Technology. Qualitative data were analyzed by the use of content narrative and thematic analysis techniques and presented in direct quotes and narrative in line with the study objectives. Quantitative data were analyzed with the help of Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) computer programme version 22. It was significant to carry out the study because it could become a major source of reference to stakeholders. The major issue facing inclusive education for gifted and talented learners with hearing impairment in inclusive education programme revolved around insufficient resources. It was concluded that there was need to persuade all stakeholders to realize that gifted and talented learners with hearing impairment are worthy of an equal access to opportunities in inclusive education programmes.

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INTRODUCTION

Article 26 of The Universal Declaration of Human Rights UNESCO (1994), states that everyone is entitled to all rights without discriminations of any kind such as race, color, sex, birth or any other status. World Conference on Education for All (1990) in Jomtien, Thailand, recommended among other things that, all children should have a right to education regardless of individual differences and each government should provide each child the most suitable education. A follow up, the Salamanca Statement on Inclusive Education of 1994 took place in Salamanca, Spain whose major recommendations addressed the right of every child to education that considers the child's unique abilities, and learning needs. The Salamanca Statement recommended that educational policies should take full account of individual

differences and situations of every learner regardless of special needs. Another World Conference on Education was held in Dakar, Senegal which adopted a World Declaration on Education for All (EFA) in the year 2000. It recommended that each country should ensure that learning needs of all young people and adults are met through equitable access to appropriate life skills education programmes. Genter (2010) argues that the right to an inclusive education is articulated in both the Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC) and the Convention on the Rights of Persons with a Disability (CRPD) which were ratified in 2008. Minton (1988), posits that education of the gifted and talented dates back to 1868. The field of gifted and talented education continued to evolve mainly in response to the changing needs of the society, especially after the Soviet Union's successful launch of the space capsule, Sputnik I in October 4, 1957 which was at the time of the history of space evolution, sparking fear in Americas that the country was falling behind the Soviets in technological capability resulting into their reexamining its

*Corresponding author: Zedekia Onyango Okoth,

St. Joseph's Technical Institute for the Deaf. P.O. Box 33--40601, Bondo, Kenya.

human capital. According to Friend (2008), the fact that the United States had not been first in achieving space flight was perceived by many Americans as an embarrassing educational failure, especially to those in the scientific, engineering, and mathematical fields. According to Fish (1995), historical development of special needs education in United States of America began with the first school for the learners with hearing impairment which was opened at Connecticut in 1871 by Thomas Hopkins Gallaudet. Smith (2004) observes that, special needs education (SNE) has evolved from neglect, private tuition, institutionalization, separation, normalization to inclusion which was due to change in social environment and this was an indication that the society had noticed the abilities of persons with disabilities and special needs. Sapon-Shevin (2003) asserts that inclusive education is understood as a developmental approach geared to meet the educational needs of all children and emphasizing access for opportunity for those who are subjected to marginalization and exclusion. Grey (2010) observes that in 1975 USA enacted the Public Law 94-142 (Education of All Handicapped Children) which emphasized Least Restrictive Environment. Allan, (2010), observes that inclusive education is an approach to education free from discriminatory beliefs, attitudes and practices. Armstrong, Armsrong, and Spandagou (2011), argue that the needs of learners must be fulfilled without preferences and inclusive schools should avoid giving advantage to individuals in favour of others. Nkechi, (2013) observes that the United Nations General Assembly emphasized that the genuine achievement of Millennium Development Goals, Education for All (EFA) and other globally agreed Development goals, needs the inclusion of the rights and opinion of persons with special needs in all endeavors at national, regional and international levels.

People with Disabilities Act 2003, part 3 article 18 in Kenya, (GOK, 2003) states that ‘‘No person, or learning institution shall deny admission to a person with special needs and disabilities to any course of study by any reason if the person has the ability to acquire substantial learning in that course. The Education Act Cap 211 of Kenya states that nobody shall be refused admission to or excluded from school. The Education Pillar in the vision 2030 aims at developing key programmes for learners with special needs, which include the gifted and talented learners with hearing impairment. Kamunge Report, GoK (1988) states that every society has its specially gifted and talented children who need special needs education to develop their special intellectual, creative, artistic or other talents to maximum level possible. RoK (2006) posits that Kenya has put policies and legislation in place to guide implementation of inclusive education for learners with special needs. The policies and legislation in Kenya have led to establishment of Oriang’ Inclusive Education Programme in Homa Bay County, Universities such as Kenyatta University which offers a course in education of the gifted and talented learners, and other tertiary institutions with programmes for the gifted and talented learners. Such institutions include, Kenya Institute of Special Education (KISE), RoK (2006) in which trainees are trained on how to teach regular gifted and talented learners but not gifted and talented learners with hearing impairment in inclusive education programme. The other institution is National Youth Talent Academy in Nairobi County. Despite the effort by Kenya government in promoting inclusive education, some teachers are still negative. Omoke (2011) observes that teachers who are against inclusive

education give reasons such as, students with disabilities would be disruptive to their classes or demand too much attention, inadequate staffing, training, lack of appropriate curriculum, inadequate support services, stress and increased workload. According to ‘Mwasiliano’ Bulletin (2012), there were learners with hearing impairment from Kenya who got medals at the Olympics Athletics in Canada in the year 2012 which was a proof that we have gifted and talented learners with hearing impairment who needs such opportunities, which they can access to nurture their gifts and talents. Kenya has hosted workshops and conferences on education of the Gifted and Talented learners. Ministry of Education (2010) organized a conference on ‘‘Laying the Foundation for Unlocking the Potentials of the Gifted and Talented Young Persons in Kenya’’ which took place in Kenyatta University and none of the persons who were given chances to display their gifts and talents was a person with hearing impairment and this was a clear indication that the gifted and talented learners with hearing impairment are yet to be given opportunities which they can access in Kenya. According to the Ministry of Education (2013), there was a workshop on *the education of gifted and talented children in Kenya* whose main sponsor was John Hopkins University Centre for Talent Youth (CTY) USA at Kenya Institute of Special Education. Among the children who were given chances to display their gifts and talents, none was hearing impaired and that showed that gifted and talented learners with hearing impairment are yet to be given opportunities which they can access to nurture their gifts and talents. Bett and Wasike, (2016), observe that Brookside Dairy in collaboration with Strathmore University sponsored East African secondary school games for talent identification which took place in Eldoret, Kenya. Those who excelled in sports and had academic qualifications were given opportunities to join the university and this was a great achievement. However, none of the listed secondary schools involved in the sports competition was for learners with hearing impairment. The key question is how gifted and talented learners with hearing impairment can be included in education programmes in Kenya. Hence the need to establish access to opportunities for gifted and talented learners with hearing impairment in inclusive education programmes in Kenya.

Purpose of the Study: The purpose of this study was to establish the challenges facing the gifted and talented learners with hearing impairment in inclusive education programmes in Kenya.

Theoretical Framework: The study was informed by Critical Theory which was (Fuchs, 2011) an approach that studied society in a dialectical way by analyzing political, economic, domination, exploitation and ideologies. Critical theory seeks to empower individuals, confront injustices and critique certain aspects of the society that are oppressive (Kincheloe and Maclaren, 2008; Prasad, 2005). It was understood as a theory that may guide the study on issues facing inclusive education programmes for gifted and talented learners with hearing impairment in Kenya.

Literature Review

Challenges facing Inclusive Education Programmes for the Gifted and Talented Learners with Hearing Impairment: According to Lancaster and Bain (2007), Australia has shown great concern for inclusive education programmes. Over recent

years, moves towards the inclusion of students with special needs in mainstream classrooms have brought about challenges, greater attention on how teachers are trained and supported. Furthermore, there has been a focus on whether newly qualified teachers feel adequately prepared to provide effective and appropriate instruction for students with special needs. A study was carried out in Australia by Lancaster and Bain in 2007 which questioned whether the preparation of pre-service teachers about inclusion is sufficient. Survey data were collected from pre-service teachers studying at a large regional Australian university. These data were examined with the purpose of determining whether pre-service teachers' views (and concerns) about inclusion and their confidence to teach in inclusive classrooms had changed as a result of studying an inclusive education subject and undertaking a practicum linked to that subject. The results of an analysis based on mean values indicated that the various concerns, namely, resources, acceptance, workplace, and academic standards, did not change markedly as consequence of the subject and practicum experiences. This analysis also showed a hierarchy of concerns running from resources through to standards. Moreover, the results, with self-efficacy serving as the covariate and using the concerns measures as the dependent variables and pre/posttest condition as the independent variable, revealed no significant difference between the various measures on the condition. The implications of the results for teacher education programmes are considered. The study was carried out in Australia which has better economic power so the findings cannot be generalized to Kenyan situation. This was a study based on inclusion of general learners with special needs while the current study is based on inclusion of gifted and talented learners with hearing impairment in Kenya. Study population of the research was teachers at a university while the current population is administrators, teachers and learners with and without hearing impairment. It can be argued that the current study may be more detailed since varied tools are used.

A study was conducted by Mafa (2012) in Harare, Zimbabwe investigated challenges of implementing inclusive education. Mofat argues that inclusion is about making schools supportive and stimulating places for staff as well as students. It is about building communities which support and celebrate their achievements. However there are a number of challenges facing implementation of inclusive education. In Zimbabwe, inclusion has been actively considered since 1994. However, there are still a lot of challenges facing the implementation of inclusion in Zimbabwe, as in a number of sub-Saharan African countries. The study adopted a qualitative methodology, where a case study design was used to generate data. The population consisted of public secondary school teachers in the Bulawayo Metropolitan Province. 25 teachers were purposively sampled for focus group discussions. Findings included lack of policy to support inclusion, negative attitudes of stakeholders, inadequate resources and lack of suitable facilities, teachers' limited skills and lack of support from instructional supervisors. The study established that besides communication problems, students experienced feelings of anger, frustration and isolation depending on the dictates of the environment. It also emerged that there was an opportunity for teachers and other stakeholders to reflect on their school and classroom practices with hearing impaired students and adopt effective strategies of managing them in inclusive secondary schools. The study in Zimbabwe focused on general understanding of inclusive education while the current study concentrated on

challenges facing inclusion of gifted and talented learners with hearing impairment. The population of the study was teachers in secondary schools while the population of the current study was teachers and learners in a technical institute and other service providers in Kenya and that may make the current study more detailed. In another study by Musengi, Mudyahoto and Chireshe (2010), whose purpose was to establish the present status of inclusive education in Zimbabwe, a number of challenges to inclusive education were revealed. The population was purposefully sampled. In this study, Bachelor of Education, Special Needs Education students were selected because of their knowledge and experience in inclusive education. Their age ranged from 27 to 46 years while their experiences in special needs education ranged from 1 to 18 years. The total population was forty-two (27 males and 15 females) first and second years Bed SNE students at Great Zimbabwe University. The research instrument used was questionnaire. The study revealed that there were lack of resources, training among teachers, and lack of commitment by policy makers. This study was based on university students while the current population was from a tertiary institution and relevant service providers. The research tool used for data collection was questionnaire while the current study included questionnaire, interview, focus group discussion and observation checklist which may provide more detailed data. Chaula (2014) conducted a study in Tanzania on challenges facing inclusive education. The study found that the country was offering primary education for some students with different disabilities including visual impairment, hearing impairments, mental retardation, physical impairments, autism and multiple disabilities in both special and integrated schools. Tanzania as a member of the international community has signed and ratified various international declarations that work towards equality in all ways of life, education being one of them. The study in Tanzania aimed at assessing the challenges that teachers face in implementation of inclusive education in primary schools in Tanzania. Using Mbeya inclusive schools as a case study, it assessed the implementation of inclusive education in primary schools.

The study identified challenges that hindered the implementation of inclusive education by teachers. It used both the principles of constructivist theory and system theory to unveil these challenges. The method of data collection employed in this study was qualitative which involved observations and interviews. The findings indicated that teachers implemented inclusive education in schools in a very difficult environment which affects their work in one way or another. Teachers tried to the best of their ability and within the available resources to implement inclusive education which indicated success to some level. Teachers had good cooperation among themselves and with the head teachers. Good cooperation helped them achieve their goal at the school level. The study by Chaula (2014) in Tanzania also found that there were insufficient teaching and learning materials, lack of knowledge on inclusive education among teachers, large number of students, unclear policies on inclusive education, lack of support from the government, lack of collaboration between teachers and parents, few number of teachers at the school, inadequate funds in supporting inclusive education and negative attitude of teachers and parents towards inclusive education. The study proposed the way forward in order to overcome the mentioned challenges. This included preparing seminars for teachers on inclusive education so that they could

learn how to conduct inclusive classes. The government should monitor and evaluate the implementation of inclusive education and make available sufficient funding to support it. The government should involve teachers in decision making to guarantee the achievement of better results in inclusive education. The study in Tanzania was on inclusive education of people with disability while the current study was specific to inclusion of gifted and talented learners with hearing impairment. The study in Tanzania used both the principle of constructivist theory and systems theory to unveil challenges while the current study was guided by Critical theory. This study was based on qualitative method to collect data while the current study was based on mixed method of collecting data. The study was limited to observation and interview schedule while the current study included interview, questionnaires, observation schedule and focus group discussion and this may make the current study give more detailed information on education of the gifted and talented learners with hearing impairment in inclusive education programme.

Obadiah (2012) carried out a study in Embu East, Kenya whose purpose was to establish constraints facing inclusive education for children with special needs in public primary schools. The study adopted descriptive survey research design and targeted all the head teachers and teachers in the 70 public primary schools in the district. Interval sampling technique was adopted to select the 12 participating schools and purposive sampling to select the participants. The sample size was 12 (17%) head teachers and 108 (15%) teachers. Data were collected using questionnaires and observation checklist. From the findings, schools were not well equipped with physical and teaching/learning resources to support inclusive education; female special needs education teachers were fewer than their counterparts; teaching personnel who had undergone SNE training were few with the head teachers lagging denoting a shortage of manpower with requisite knowledge, skills and attitudes making it difficult to mainstream special education in regular primary schools; numerous support services that schools obtained from various stakeholders were noted; in spite of the Government of the Republic of Kenya being the main financier of inclusive education, its financial support was inadequate with delayed remittance; despite the head teachers being financial managers in their schools, majority had not undertaken school management courses. Moreover, few severe cases of learners with special needs enrolled requiring support from their parents, siblings and peers were reported. Other constraints faced by teachers in inclusive education were lack of motivation, irregular attendance of learners with special needs, large class enrollment and lack of enough support from colleagues which compromised the quality of inclusive education. Other challenges included poverty. At family level, poverty seemed to aggravate the situation for people with disabilities particularly with regard to schooling. This requires collaboration and support from community members to pool their resources to prepare schools which meet the diverse needs of children with disabilities. The study was based on general inclusion of learners with special needs while the current study focused on inclusive education programme for gifted and talented learners with hearing impairment. Mwende (2010) carried out a study in Meru North whose purpose was to investigate factors hindering effective inclusion of children who are hearing impaired in one special primary school and units. It used a descriptive survey design. One special primary

school and 22 units were sampled for the study, which represent 30% of the total population. Purposive and stratified random samplings were used for the particular special primary school and units. Questionnaires, interview schedule and observation checklists formed the basic research instruments. The results showed that Majority (62.5%) of the parents preferred their children to be enrolled in residential special schools. Only 57% of the teachers always used the teaching/learning resources, 87% of the respondents indicated that they had over 10 years of teaching experience, 75% of them went through KCSE system of education and 57% of the teachers prepare their lessons before teaching the children who are hearing impaired. It was concluded that lack of many trained teachers in special needs education may affect learning of pupils with hearing impairment in special schools and units, inadequate teaching and learning resources impeded learning of pupils with hearing impairment and lack of inspection of special schools and units by the Ministry of Education officers affect effectiveness. The study was based on challenges facing persons with special needs and disabilities while the current study was based on challenges facing inclusion of gifted and talented learners with hearing impairment in Kenya and this may give better understanding of inclusive education programmes for gifted and talented learners with hearing impairment.

Chepkwony (2013) carried out a study in Kericho, Kenya whose purpose was to establish constraints facing the implementation of inclusive education. The study found out that there were a number of challenges facing inclusive education programmes. The National Special Needs Education Policy Framework in Kenya stipulates that there shall be elimination of disparities and enhancement of equity and equality for all learners, especially inclusion of learners with special needs in the education system. The problem was that there still existed inequalities and disparities in accessing quality education among learners with special needs. The study was guided by the following objectives: To describe personnel-related constraints facing implementation of inclusive education, identify constraints facing availability of resources in inclusive settings, find out curriculum-related constraints in regard to learners with special needs and find out constraints related to the physical environment. A case study design of two selected inclusive secondary schools in Kericho County was used. The case study used a purposive sample of two public secondary schools; respondents included the two Principals, teachers, resource teachers, and Educational Assessment Research Centre officers. Interviews were conducted for administrators, teachers and educational assessment research teams. Major findings included: general curriculum teachers had no basic knowledge in handling learners with special needs; the two schools experienced shortage of trained special needs education teachers because those already trained fear laborious work and are unavailable to provide their services to learners with special needs and teachers had no basic knowledge in handling this category of learners. The study was informed by Vygotsky's socio-cultural theory while the current study was guided by Critical Theory of social justice. Population of the study was secondary school teachers while the current study population was the Principal, teachers and learners of a technical institute, quality assurance and standards officer, educational assessment and research center and national council of persons with disabilities officers and that may make the current study have more detailed

information about gifted and talented learners with hearing impairment in Kenya.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

The study was conducted in Siaya County, Kenya and was based on a mixed methods approach. Creswell, (2014) assert that mixed methods approach involve collecting both qualitative and quantitative data, integrating two forms of data using distinct designs that may involve philosophical assumptions and theoretical frameworks. The design was concurrent triangulation. Joffrin (2010) argues that it allows the researcher to collect both qualitative and quantitative data concurrently. The target population, which Bhatt (2011) defines as the entire mass of observations, which was the parent group from which a sample was to be formed. It included 1 Principle, 28 teachers, and 208 learners of the targeted institution, 3 Educational Assessment and Research Center officers, 1 National Council of Persons with Disabilities officer, 2 Quality Assurance and Standards officers in Siaya County which was got through purposive sampling. William, (2011), purposive sampling is selecting respondents that are believed to have the required characteristics needed for the study.

Research Instruments: The study applied four research instruments, namely; interview schedule, questionnaires, focus group discussion, and observation checklist.

Reliability: Walingo and Ngaira, (2008): Phelan and Wren (2006) argue that reliability is a measure of the degree to which a research instrument yields consistent results or data after repeated trials. The researcher used test-retest technique during piloting to ascertain reliability. The results from piloting were correlated to check for reliability using Pearson Correlation Coefficient. Orotho(2009), piloting is a mini-version of a full scale study or a trial run down in preparation of the complete study. Bapir (2014) posit that qualitative research can be evaluated or made reliable by checking how and to what extent consistent methods and procedures are used in the process of data collection.

Validity: Thomson (2011), validity is the degree to which any measurement instrument succeeds in describing or qualifying what it is designed to measure. Tappen, (2011) content validity is a measure of the degree to which data collected using a particular instrument represents a specific domain of indicators or content of a particular concept. The researcher used expert judgment to determine validity of the research instruments.

Data Analysis: Bhatt (2011), data analysis is studying the tabulated materials in order to determine inherent facts. Data obtained from the field in raw form, Mugenda and Mugenda (2003), is difficult to interpret. Such data must be cleaned, coded, key-punched into a computer and analyzed. It is from the results of such analysis, that researchers are able to make sense of the data. The researcher applied descriptive statistics (Patton, 2002) where measures of central tendencies such as mean, median and mode, where tabulating, graphing were used in describing quantitative data.

Analysis of Qualitative Data: Qualitative data were analyzed by the use of narrative and thematic analysis. According to University of Manchester (2012), narrative analysis involves

analysis of narrative materials ranging from naturally occurring narratives to oral life stories. Thematic analysis was performed (William, 2011) through the process of coding in six phases to create established meaningful patterns. The variant of triangulation design used was convergence model. According to Tashakkori and Tedllie (2003), the model requires that qualitative data and quantitative data were analyzed separately then the data results were compared, that was creating codes and themes qualitatively, then counting the number of times they occur in the text data. Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) programme computer version 22 was used to present quantitative data for analysis in graphs, pie-charts, frequency tables and percentages while qualitative data was analyzed according to the themes of the study.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Challenges facing Inclusive Education programmes for Gifted and Talented Learners who are Hearing Impaired: The challenges facing inclusive education revolved around communication barrier, insufficient classrooms, workshops, games equipment, tools, machines, learning materials, lack of training in special needs education, and insufficient computers. Data were collected using questionnaires, interview schedule, focus group discussion and observation checklist. The respondents included learners, teachers and the principal of an institution, EARC officer, NCPWD officer, QAS officers. The quantitative data are presented in table 4.16 and qualitative data are presented in direct quotes. Both presented data are analyzed then discussed. Table 1 shows a number of challenges facing inclusive education as expressed by the learners. They are grouped into three; The first group reveals that 2 learners indicated different religions as an issue facing inclusive education for gifted and talented learners with hearing impairment, 4 learners indicated inadequate desks, 7 learners insufficient chairs, 32 learners irregular attendance by teachers, 21 learners lack of reference books, 23 learners lateness by teachers, 22 learners insufficient classrooms, 1 learner poor state of chalkboard, 92 learners many teachers do not know Sign Language, 3 learners unsteady electricity supply. The second group shows that; 10 learners inadequate computers, 7 learners insufficient machines and tools, 11 learners insufficient time for practical, 5 learners lack of materials, 4 learners lack of Wi-Fi, 31 learners lack of technicians, 140 learners many teachers do not know Sign Language. In the third group, 25 learners indicated inadequate balls, 18 learners lack of indoor games, 16 learners lack of nets, 17 learners lack of soccer boots, 113 learners communication barrier, and 19 learners indicated insufficient fields for games activities. During Interview, the teachers including the principal were asked to comment on the challenges facing inclusive education in the institution. They all concurred with the learners on the various challenges and added issues of lack of fees, lack of opportunities for salaried jobs for the learners and no commitment of the quality assurance and standards officers. They observed; that the challenges facing inclusion include, communication barrier, inadequate computers, lack of school fees, and lack of training in special needs education (T17) that there was insufficient machines, tools and learning materials and irregular attendance of some teachers. There was lack of opportunities for either salaried or self-employment. Some were made to do courses not of their choice by either parents or guardians. There was lack of library, internet coverage and Wi-Fi to instill research

Table 1. Challenges facing inclusive education

		Respondents gender		Total
		Male	Female	
Problems learners face in classrooms	Different religions	0	2	2
	Inadequate desks	3	1	4
	Insufficient chairs	7	0	7
	Irregular attendance by teachers	24	8	32
	Lack of reference books	12	9	21
	Lateness by teachers	13	10	23
	No enough classrooms	11	12	22
	Poor state of chalkboards	1	0	1
	Most teachers do not know sign language	45	47	92
Unsteady electrical supply	3	0	3	
Total		119	89	208

		Respondents gender		Total
		Male	Female	
Problems learners face at workshops	Inadequate computers	3	7	10
	Insufficient machines and tools	3	4	7
	Insufficient time	9	2	11
	For practicals			
	Lack of materials	5	0	5
	Lack of wi-fi	4	0	4
	Lack of technician	15	16	31
	Most teachers do not know sign language	75	65	140
Total		119	89	208

		Respondents gender		Total
		Male	Female	
Problems learners face in games	Inadeate balls	10	15	25
	Lack of indoor games	8	10	18
	Lack of nets	11	05	16
	Lack of boots	17	00	17
	Communication barrier	64	49	113
	No enough fields	15	04	19
Total		119	89	208

skills (T24) that some are from very poor background so to maintain them, the institution has to waive their fees. Quality assurance and standards officers are not committed in their roles and funding of co-curricular activities is insufficient (P). The officers from the Educational Assessment and Research Center, the officer from the National Council for persons with disabilities and the quality assurance and standards officers were also asked about the challenges that gifted learners with hearing impairment may be facing in the institution. They identified challenges such as stigma on the part of the parents, lack of early intervention services, lack of hearing aids, lack of knowledge on sign language, inadequate ENT specialists and lack of a clear policy on including this group of learners. Surprisingly, the QUASOs confessed that they are not able to supervise quality education for this group of learners because they are not trained in special needs education. They observed; That due to stigma, some parents keep gifted and talented learners with hearing impairment at home. Lack of teachers trained to teach gifted and talented learners with hearing impairment in inclusive education programme. Lack of hearing aids and very few ENT doctors affect inclusion (EARCO2). Some learners fail to be identified early enough for intervention, our funding is insufficient and that limits activities in the institution. Most teachers in technical institutions are not trained to communicate in sign language so interaction is limited (NCPWD). Some parents avoid stigmatization by hiding their gifted and talented learners with hearing impairment at home. Syllabus coverage is affected by communication problem. Most technical terms do not have ready signs.

There is lack of clear policy on inclusion of gifted and talented learners with hearing impairment. I am not trained in special needs education so supervision is difficult (QUASO). These findings concur with studies carried out elsewhere. Mafa (2012) asserts that in Zimbabwe, there is lack of policy to support inclusion and that has led to negative attitudes of stakeholders and inadequate resources. A successful educational programme is pegged on a clear policy. It is after a specific policy that the government and any other stakeholder may give full support to inclusive education programme for gifted and talented learners with hearing impairment. Chaula (2014) observe that in Tanzania, due to lack of policy, government support is limited. Chepkwony (2013) observes that there still exist inequalities and disparities in accessing quality education among learners with special needs and there is also shortage of trained personnel in Kenya. The argument is confirmed by the responses from the interview of the respondents in this study.

Conclusion

The challenges revealed revolved around, resources, acceptance, work environment, and academic standards. Resources were personnel, infrastructure, time, materials, tools, machines and games equipment which were in place to promote acceptance of inclusive education for gifted and talented learners who were hearing impaired. Some of the learners were mistaken for being indisciplined just because teachers who were not trained in special needs education failed to understand their unique needs and identify them in time for

correct intervention strategies. There was lack of supervision by quality assurance and standards officers and support from most stakeholders. Insufficient awareness programmes to promote inclusive education in the institution was noted.

Recommendations

The section finally explored the limitations of the study and made recommendations for future research. Teachers should be motivated by the government through promotion, enumeration, and scholarships for further training to be more committed in serving gifted and talented learners who are hearing impaired in inclusive education programmes in Kenya. The government should consider posting more teachers trained in special needs education to reduce teacher/ learners ration in the institution practicing inclusive education for gifted and talented learners who are hearing impaired. Most stakeholders did not give enough support to institutions practicing inclusive education for gifted and talented learners who were hearing impaired. However, enough support could reduce the problem caused by lack of resources, clear policy framework, work environment and academic standards. Technical trained teachers should be encouraged to go for special needs education training to solve the problem of communication barrier in the institution.

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