

Factors Influencing Dropout of Learners with Disabilities in Regular Primary Schools in Kisumu East District, Kenya

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Abstract

Education for All (EFA) is the current call by governments to ensure that all members of the society access education without discrimination based on disability. In line with this, governments worldwide including Kenya have attempted to implement inclusive education programme to incorporate learners with Learning Disabilities in the same environment. However, learners with LD often drop out of school more as compared to their regular counterparts particularly in Kisumu East District. Statistics from Kisumu East District Educational Assessment and Resource Center (EARC) indicates that between the years 2006 and 2010, out of an enrollment of 300 learners with LD, 100 dropped out of school. This accounted for 33.3%, which was high as compared to dropout of the neighboring Districts. This happens despite the fact that teachers in the Districts Assessment and resource Center conduct sensitization Programmes and workshops for the teachers and stakeholders in education. Causes of the dropout are yet to be established. The purpose of the study was to establish factors that influence dropout rates. The objectives were to: Determine the influence of Curriculum adaptation on the dropout of learners with LD, Establish the influence of teaching methods on the dropout of learners with LD, Find out the influence of teacher attributes on the dropout of learners with LD, Establish the influence of teaching and learning resources on the dropout of learners with LD, and Determine the influence of parental support on the dropout of learners with LD . The findings of the study might provide insights towards Learning Disabilities that might be used by curriculum developers and education policy makers to reduce dropout of learners with Learning Disabilities in Kisumu East District.

Key Terms; *Dropout, Learning Disabilities, Regular Primary Schools, Attention deficit*

1. Introduction

Learning Disabilities (LD) are most defined by describing a discrepancy between ability and performance (Kirk, Gallagher, Anastasiow & Coleman, 2006). The performance assessment and standardized tests indicate that classroom achievement of children with learning disabilities fail to match their evident ability. Because learning disabilities relate specifically to classroom performance, they are rarely identified before a child enters school and confronts academic instruction (Lerner, 2006).

Defining and describing LD is a matter of ongoing discussion in the field of special education (Mercer, 2005). A broad definition that allows flexibility and agreeable to both professionals and researchers was proposed by the National Joint Committee on Learning Disabilities (cited in Lerner, 2006). The committee defines learning disabilities as a general term that refers to heterogeneous group of disorders manifested by significant difficulties in the acquisition and use of listening, speaking, reading, writing, reasoning or mathematical abilities. These disorders are intrinsic to the individual,

presumed to be due to central nervous system dysfunction and may occur across the life span. Problems in self regulatory behaviours, social perception and general instruction may exist with learning disabilities but do not by themselves constitute a learning disability (Lener & Kline, 2006).

According to Sessional Paper No 1 (Republic of Kenya, 2005) there is no accurate data on the number of learners with LD in primary schools in Kenya. It is therefore not possible to indicate with accuracy the level of dropout of learners with LD in the country. In Kisumu East District, statistics from Educational Assessment and Resource Center (EARC) indicates that between the years 2006 and 2010, out of an enrollment of 300 learners with LD, 100 dropped out of school and this accounted for 33.3%. This dropout is high as compared to the neighboring Districts.

The 2009 Kenya population census estimated the national population at 38.6 million people (Republic of Kenya, 2009). Using the 10% of the general population rule provided by the United Nations as the minimum estimate of the disabled in a given country (Meese, 2002), the number of people with Disabilities in Kenya is estimated at 3.8 million. According to the Ministry of Education in its National Special Needs Education (SNE) policy paper launched in April 2010 (Daily Nation, 2010), school age going children with Learning Disabilities form the largest group of handicapped children in Kenya accounting for 5% of the total number of handicapped children.

Statistics from the Educational Assessment and Resource Center (EARC) indicates that there is dropout of children with Learning Disabilities. The Table below shows enrolment, dropout and retention of learners with LD between 2006 and 2010 in Kisumu East District.

Table 1. Dropout rate of learners with Learning Disabilities in Kisumu East District.

Year	Enrolment	Drop out	Dropout %
2006	51	15	29.4
2007	56	24	42.8
2008	64	23	35.9
2009	73	21	28.7
2010	56	17	30.3
TOTAL	300	100	33.3

Source: Kisumu East District Educational Assessment and Resource Center, December, 2010

The Table above indicates that between the years, 2006 and 2010, 300 children were assessed as having learning disabilities. Out of these, 100 (33.3%) dropped out of school. This dropout rate was high given that the Kisumu East District had 113 teachers trained in Special Needs Education. The monthly statistical report (December, 2010) from the Provincial Director of Education's office showed that amongst the districts that were split from the greater Kisumu District, Kisumu East has the highest number of dropout of learners with LD. The Table below shows enrolment and dropout rate of learners with LD in the neighboring districts.

Table 2. Dropout rate of learners with Learning Disabilities in the neighboring Districts

District	Enrolment of LD	Dropout	Dropout %
Kisumu East	300	100	33.3
Kisumu West	64	12	18.7
Kisumu North	72	21	29.1
Nyando	109	17	15.5
Nyakach	67	7	10
Muhoroni	114	27	23
Total	726	177	24.3

Source: Nyanza Provincial Director of education (Monthly statistical report, December, 2010)

The Table above indicates that Kisumu East District had the highest enrolment (300) of learners with

LD and the highest dropout rate 100 (33.3%). Kisumu North District had an enrolment of 72 learners with LD and a dropout rate of 21(29.1%). Nyakach had the least dropout rate 7 (10%). The high rate of dropout of LD learners in Kisumu East District was a concern for stakeholders in education. The Educational Assessment and Resource Center in collaboration with stakeholders in education, organized workshops for teachers and parents on Special Needs Education with emphasis on education of learners with LD. This meant that teachers were aware of this category of learners. According to information from the Educational Assessment and Resource Center (EARC), the schools where LD learners were placed had at least a teacher with some level of training or awareness in Special Needs Education. The District had a functional Educational Assessment and Resource centre with five assessment teachers who are constantly in touch with the teachers that teach these learners with LD. Despite the creation of awareness to both the teachers and parents by the EARC personnel as well as the technical support they give the teachers in managing learners with LD in the regular schools, there was still high drop out of learners with LD in Kisumu East District as compared to the neighboring districts. The dropout in Kisumu East district was still higher than the dropout of all neighboring districts combined which was 177 (24.3%). This generated concern to the stakeholders in education. This was also a justification for choosing the district for the study. The researcher therefore sought to establish factors that influenced the perceived dropout of learners with LD in Kisumu East District.

2. Research Question

- (i) How does curriculum adaptation influence dropout of learners with Learning Disabilities.
- (ii) How does teaching methods influence the dropout of learners with Learning Disabilities?
- (iii) How does teachers attribute influence the dropout of learners with Learning Disabilities?
- (iv) How does Teaching and learning Resources influence dropout of learners with Learning Disabilities?
- (v) How does parental support influence dropout of learners with learning Disabilities?

3. Research Methodology

The study used a descriptive survey design. Descriptive survey design is relevant for this study because it describes the state of affairs, as it exists and allows collection of sufficient information in a relatively short period from a large representation of the population (Mugenda & Mugenda, 2008). According to Mugenda and Mugenda (2008) descriptive survey is appropriate because it enables collection of information from members of the public with reference to the variables involved through administration of the questionnaire, interview and observation schedules to determine the status of the situation under study.

The study was conducted in Kisumu East District of Nyanza Province. Kisumu East District covers a total area of 557.7 km². It borders Nyando District to the South East, Kisumu North District to the North, Nyakach District to the south and Muhoroni District to the South West. It lies within longitude 34^o 10 E and 35^o 20 E and latitude 0^o 20 S and 0^o 50 S. The total population of the District as at the plan period of 2008 stood at 453,593 people (Kisumu East District Development plan, 2008- 2012). It was expected that by the end of the plan period 2012, the total projected population would be expected to be 491,371. The main economic activities included mechanized farming for sugarcane plantation and industrial engagements in the town area. Fishing was also an important activity particularly for those living along the lake. Kisumu City being the main urban centre of the district had influence on the life styles of the districts population. The district has high prevalence of children with LD and the number of those dropping out of school is alarming. The increased population of LD children could be partly attributed to social factors such as drug abuse, promiscuity, poverty and other aspects of social life. The researcher sought to factors that influence dropout rate of learners with LD.

The study targeted 180 teachers, 20 head teachers, and 5 assessment teachers in Kisumu East District. Each of the selected schools had 10 learners with learning disabilities. Table 3.1 shows the study population. The sample consisted of 162 teachers, 18 head teachers and 4 EARC teachers. This

sample was selected by saturated sampling technique after 18 (10%) teachers, 2 head teachers (10%) and 1 (20%) EARC teachers were selected for the pilot study. Essentially the whole population was involved in the study except those who were involved in the pilot study. Saturated sampling technique is a sampling procedure in which the members of the target population are selected as many as possible because they are few. (Ary, Jacobs & Razavich,

The head teachers questionnaire was used to collect information on qualification and experience, teachers' attitude towards teaching learners with learning disabilities and methods of teaching that teachers used to teach LD learners. Also it helped to collect information on availability of teaching and learning materials, extent to which they influence wastage of LD learners, the number of SNE teachers in the schools, the content targeted for adaptation and influence of parental support on dropout of learners with LD. There were 9 items with 5 open ended and 4 closed questions..

The teachers' questionnaire was used to collect data on professional qualification curriculum adaptation, methods of teaching LD learners, availability and use of teaching and learning resources and influence of parental support. The questionnaire also collected information on the teachers' attitudes towards LD learners and influence of parental support on dropout in education of the LD learners. Lesson observation schedule was used to collect data on methods of teaching learners with LD and on the use of teaching and learning resources. It also allowed the researcher to find out how teachers handled learners with learning disabilities during the teaching process. A total of 16 lessons were observed. The Lesson observation schedule is attached as Appendix C.

Assessment teachers working in the District Assessment Center were subjected to an in- depth interview. The interview served to check on the authenticity of teachers and head teachers' responses. There were 7 items in the interview schedule. The ISAT attached as Appendix D.

Reliability of the instruments was determined through split half technique. The instruments (questionnaire and interview schedule) items were split into two sub sets by placing all odd numbered items in one sub set and all even numbered items in another sub set. This means that the scores for each individual respondent were divided into two subset scores. Scores for all the odd and even number items for each of the respondents in the pilot study were computed separately. The odd numbered scores were correlated with even numbered scores. The Pearson product moment correlation coefficient was used to calculate the result. The value of r was found to be 0.8. Thus, the instrument was found to be reliable because the value of r was more than 0.5. In social sciences, acceptable reliability coefficient range from 0.6 (Mugenda & Mugenda 2003).

Validity is defined as the accuracy and meaningfulness of inferences, which are based on research results (Ary et al 1996). It is the degree to which the results obtained from the analysis of the data usually represents the phenomenon under study. The instruments were taken to two experts in the area in the department of Educational Communication, Technology and Curriculum studies who examined the content of the instruments and advised on content validity. Improvements were then made on the final copy of the instruments in light of the recommendations. The pilot study also enabled the researcher to improve on the validity by identifying inconsistencies, difficulties and weaknesses in the responses and making improvements.

Qualitative data was received in written form and analyzed according to the various themes, categories and sub categories as they emerged during the study. Quantitative was analyzed using frequency counts, percentages and mean. To arrive at mean scores, responses were coded as follows

- VLE- 1 point, LE- 2point, SE-3 points and NA- 4 points.
- Adequate-1 point, Inadequate- 2 points and Not available- 3 points

Mean scores were then worked out for all responses. In the interpretation of scores, a mean towards 1 denoted adequate or very large extent while a mean towards 3 denoted Not applicable or not available.

4. Results

3.1 Curriculum Adaptation

One of the concerns of this study was to establish the influence of curriculum adaptation on the

influence of learners with learning disabilities in regular primary schools. Information on this was collected by use of questionnaire.

The Table below shows the teachers responses on the influence of curriculum adaptation for learners with Learning Disabilities. Out of 162 teachers, 75.9% indicated that the curriculum for learners with LD was not adapted. This suggested that the primary school curriculum is not suitable for learners with learning disabilities.

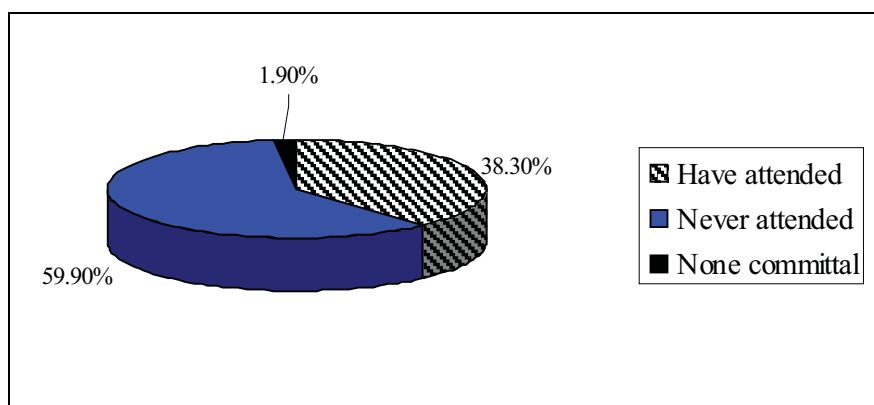
Table 3. Teachers’ responses on curriculum adaptation

Response	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Not adapted	123	75.9
Adapted	22	13.5
Non committal	17	10.4
Total	162	100

The number of respondents who indicated that curriculum was not adapted by the teachers were 123 (75.9%). The respondents who indicated that the curriculum was adapted were 22 which was 13.5%. These were probably teachers who had no training in special needs and could therefore adapt the curriculum. This suggested that there is serious problem with adaptation of the curriculum in regular primary schools to enable learners with learning disabilities benefit in their education.

Kirk, Gallagher, Anastasiow and coleman (2006) concurred with the findings of the study by observing that, the regular school curriculum is not adapted by teachers for learners with LD because teachers lack the necessary skills. In their view, the extent to which any curriculum can be adapted to enhance achievement of learners with LD depends on the ability of the teacher to select materials of high interest to reinforce the basic curriculum, use manipulative or hands on materials, create activities that require active participation of the learners and use visual aids that supplement aural and written information. Lerner (2006) also noted that the regular school curriculum is rigid, more of a routine and does not provide space for adaptation Kauffman (2005) stated that the scale and scope of curriculum adaptation would only be determined after a thorough assessment of an individual learner which regular teachers are not able to do due to lack of relevant skills in special needs education.

The Figure below shows the percentage of teachers who had attended in-service training in SNE, and those who had not attended.



In-service courses, workshops and seminars update teachers on strategies of handling learners with LD. The chart a above shows that 59.9% of teachers that teach learners with LD had not undergone some in service training in Special Needs Education. This suggests that out of 162 teachers that teach learners with LD, 95% are not capable of teaching them effectively. They definitely lack the skills to adapt the curriculum. Adapting curriculum requires a teacher to understand the special needs of the

learners with LD in terms of content delivery (Lerner, 2006). It entails selection of relevant and attractive learning and teaching resources, identifying the specific problem areas in specific subjects and teaching the learner as an individual not as a group (Kirk, Gallagher, Anastasiow & Coleman, 2006). According to Heward (2003), a teacher with professional training in Special Needs education should be able to identify specific curriculum content areas to adapt. Only 38.3% of the teachers had attended in-service training in Special Needs Education. Teachers with Special education training have the ability to identify specific curriculum areas to be adapted.

Table 4. Teachers views on targeted areas for the curriculum adaptation

Area targeted	Frequency	%
Subjects Content	65	40.1
Teaching Method	55	33.9
Teaching Resources	20	12.3
Classroom Arrangement	15	9.2
All the areas of the curriculum	2	1.2

The above table indicates that 40% of the respondents were of the opinion that subject content should be targeted for adaptation because learners with Learning Disabilities are said to have difficulties in understanding the content in the regular curriculum. Learners with learning disabilities experience problems in specific academic skill areas mainly reading, language, writing and mathematics (Lerner, 2006). It is therefore important that the curriculum content should be adapted to respond to the learners with Learning disabilities personal talents and interests. 33.9% of the respondents indicated that reading methods should be targeted for adaptation. In support of this, Bender (2007) noted that learners with LD exhibit different styles of learning and teachers need different methods at their disposal hence the needs for adaptation. Wang (2007) is also in agreement with the idea that teaching method is an aspects of curriculum that require adaptation in order for the teachers to deliver the information to the learners accordingly

The respondents indicated that other areas that should be targeted for adaptation include; learning and teaching resource 12.3%, classroom arrangement 9.2% and all areas of the curriculum 1.2%. The findings concurred with the fact that learners with Learning Disabilities have trouble mostly with the subject content and methods of teaching which should targeted for adaptation. Table 3.4 shows the view of teachers on the level of influence of curriculum adaptation on wastage of LD learners

Table 5. Teachers views on the level of influence of curriculum adaptation on dropout.

TEACHERS	VLE		LE		SE		NA	
	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%
SNE TRS	37	97.7	0	0	0	0	0	0
NON SNE TRS	105	64.8	12	7.4	6	3.7	0	0

Regarding teachers views on the influence of curriculum adaptation on dropout of learners with LD, 37 (97.7%) of SNE teachers indicated that it influences dropout to a Very large. For Non Special Needs education teachers 105 (64.8%) indicated that curriculum adaptation influence was to a very large extent while 12 (7.4%) and 6 (3.7%) indicated that it influences dropout to large and small extent respectively. This suggests that lack of curriculum adaptation by the teachers influences dropout of learners with learning Disabilities.

3.2 Methods of teaching learners with learning disabilities.

The objective here was to determine the influence of teaching methods on dropout of learners with LD. The tools used to collect data were head teachers and teacher's questionnaires and lesson observation

schedule. The items had options of the methods recommended for teaching LD learners. Table 4.4 shows teaching methods used by both SNE and Non SNE teachers in regular classrooms. The methods used include task analysis, peer tutoring, direct method, clinical teaching, psychotherapeutic, cognitive strategies, Individualized Educational Programme and a combination of all.

Table 6. Teaching methods used by teachers in regular classrooms

Method	SNE Teachers		Non SNE Teachers	
	Frequency	%	Frequency	%
All	9	41.1	3	2.5
Task analysis	8	23.5	4	3.3
Peer tutoring	4	15.1	1	0.8
I.E.P	5	15.1	0	0
Direct instruction	5	14.7	0	0
Clinical	2	5.8	0	0
None	1	0.34	146	90.
Psychotherapeutic	0	0	0	0
Cognitive	0	0	0	0
Total	34		120	

In teaching learners with LD 41.1% SNE teachers and 2.5% Non- SNE indicated that they used all the special methods for teaching learners with LD, 23.5% SNE and 3.3% of Non SNE used task analysis., 15.1% SNE teachers and 0.8% Non SNE teachers used peer tutoring, 14.7% SNE used direct instruction and Non of SNE used the same method. Other methods such as psychotherapeutic and cognitive were not used by either category of teachers. However, 112 (90.3%) Non-SNE teachers indicated that they did not use any of the special teaching methods recommended for teaching learners with LD. This probably meant that they used inappropriate teaching methods as observed by the researcher and shown in the table below.

Table 7. Use of Special Teaching methods by the teachers as observed in the classroom

Teaching Methods	Appropriate		Inappropriate	
	N	%	N	%
Task analysis	11	68.75	5	31.25
All	9	56.25	7	43.7
I. E. P	7	43.75	9	56.25
Peer tutoring	2	12.5	14	87.5
Clinical	1	6.25	15	93.75
Cognitive	0	0	16	100
Psychotherapeutic	0	0	16	100

KEY: N= Number of lessons observed. Appropriate= correctly used. Inappropriate= Not correctly used.

As indicated in the table above, out of 16 lessons observed, 11 (68.75%) of the lessons observed the use of Task analysis method was appropriate and 5 (31.25%) was inappropriate. In 2 (12.5%) lessons Direct Instruction method was Appropriately used and in 14 (87.5%) lessons it was inappropriately applied. In 7 (43.7%) of the lessons, Individualized Education programme method was appropriately used while in 9 (56.25%) lessons it was inappropriately used by the teachers. Other special teaching methods had higher percentage of inappropriate use for instance in 16 (100%) and 14 (87.5%) of the lessons, the teachers used cognitive and peer tutoring methods inappropriately.

This suggested that the teachers probably did not understand these methods due to lack of skills. As a result learners with LD probably get discouraged and dropout of school. As observed by Swanson (2001), teachers teaching in regular classrooms should have at their disposal a variety of special teaching methods to motivate learners with LD to learn and reduce dropout rate. Indeed lack of use of

special teaching methods has adverse influence on dropout of learners with LD. Table 6.4 shows teacher’s views on the influence of inability to use special methods.

Table 8. Teachers responses on the influence of lack of use Special Method on dropout

Teachers Categories	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%
SNE Trs	36	94.7	2	5.2%	0	0	0	0
Non SNE	110	67.9	8	4.9	6	3.7	0	0

KEY SNE Trs = Special Needs Education Teachers. **Non SN** = Non Special Needs Education Teachers

The Table above indicates that, 35 (94.7%) out of 38 SNE teachers and 84 (67.9%) out of 124 Non Special needs Education teachers indicated that they strongly agree with the view that inability to use special teaching methods has influence on dropout of learners with learning disabilities. This was a clear indication that lack of use special methods contributed to dropout of learners with LD. Meyer and Hammil (2002) concurs with this view by pointing out that inability by the teachers to use special methods recommended for teaching learners with LD in regular classroom is a major reason for school drop out for learners with LD.

The syllabus for primary teachers’ pre-service course has aspects of Special Needs education.

3.3 Teachers Attributes

The objective was to determine the influence of teachers attributes on dropout of learners with LD. Table 7.4 shows the influence of the teachers attributes on dropout on the dropout of learners with Learning Disabilities. The aspects included the teacher’s attitude, teacher’s professional qualification, teachers’ experience, teachers ability to adapt the curriculum, in-service training, inadequate syllabus coverage and the skill of the classroom organization.

Table 9. Influence of teachers attributes on the dropout of Learners with Learning Disabilities according to head teachers

Teachers attribute	VLE		LE		SE		NA		Mean Score
	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%	
Teachers attitude	5	27.7	8	44.5	3	16.7	1	5.6	1.8
Teachers professional Qualification	8	45.4	4	22.2	4	22.2	2	11.1	2.0
Teachers experience	5	27.8	4	22.2	6	33.3	3	16.7	2.0
Inadequate syllabus coverage	6	33.3	6	33.3	4	22.2	2	11.1	2.1
Classroom organization	5	27.8	6	33.3	7	38.9	2	11.0	2.1
Teachers ability to adapt curriculum	5	16.7	9	50.6	3	16.7	2	11.1	2.24
Teachers in-service training	5	27.8	4	22.2	6	33.3	3	16.7	2.3

KEY: VLE = Very Large Extent. **LE** = Large Extent. **SA**= Small Extent. **NA** = Not Applicable

The table above indicates that 8 (44.5%) out of 18 head teachers were of the opinion that teachers professional qualification influenced dropout of learners with LD to Very Large Extent, 9 (50.6%) indicated that teachers ability to adapt the curriculum influenced the dropout of learners with learning disabilities to Large Extent and 7 (38.9%) indicated that classroom organization influenced the

dropout of learners with LD to a Small Extent. In agreement with this view, O' Hara and Levy (2004) observed that the teachers attitude determines the willingness of the teacher to work with the learner. Meese (2002) emphasized that the teachers professional qualification is a critical variable that determines the competency and the ability of the teacher to adapt the curriculum to suit learners with LD. A teacher who is professional qualified in Special Needs Education is likely to realize that Learning

Disabilities may influence every aspect of a learner with Learning Disabilities world and may use appropriate strategies to enhance learning.

Kirk (2006) argues that teachers' ability to adapt the curriculum is an important aspect in teaching learners with learning disabilities therefore inability of the teacher to adapt the curriculum may result in lack of interests in learning. This may result in drop out of learners LD. Researches (Lerner, 2006, Wong & Donahue, 2002, Wallace & Hammil, 2002) have shown that ability of the teacher to adapt curriculum is a strong indicator to the success of a learner with LD.

The Table below indicates the influence of teachers professional qualification on the dropout rate of learners with learning disabilities in every school that was sampled.

Table 10. Distribution of teachers and dropout rate

Schools	Total no of teachers	SNE	Non SNE	% Sne	Learners	Dropout	%
1	8	2	6	25	13	12	92.3
2	7	3	4	42.8	10	6	60
3	9	5	4	55.5	12	3	25
4	8	1	7	12.5	12	7	77.7
5	8	2	6	25	13	7	76.9
6	8	4	4	50	13	5	38.4
7	8	2	6	25	10	7	70
8	9	3	6	33.3	10	7	70
9	8	5	3	62.5	13	3	23.0
10	10	4	6	40	10	6	60.7
11	8	1	7	12.5	10	8	80
12	9	5	4	55.5	12	4	33.3
13	10	5	5	50	14	8	57.1
14	8	2	6	25	12	7	58.3
15	10	5	5	50	12	6	50
16	10	3	7	30	13	4	30.7
17	10	2	8	20	11	5	45.5
18	14	6	8	42.8	12	3	37.5
TOTAL	162	59	103		200	108	

KEY SNE- Special Needs Education Teachers. **Non SNE-**Non Special Needs Education teachers

Column 1 indicates sample schools and column 2 represents the total number of teachers in each sample school. Column 3 represents the number of SNE teachers.

The dropout rate was consistent with the number of SNE teachers in a school. For instance in school one, there were 2 Special Needs Education teachers out of a total of 8 teachers which was 25%. The enrolment of learners with LD in this school at the beginning of the term was 13. By the end of the term, 12 had dropped out of school. This dropout was 92.3%. However, in school 3 where there were 5 SNE teachers, out of an enrolment of 12 learners with LD, only 3 dropped out which was only 25%. This could probably be attributed to the number of professionally qualified teachers in SNE who had the skills to adapt the curriculum that attracted LD learners to school. Another case in point was school 4 with a dropout rate of 77.7% where there was only one Special Needs teacher against seven non-SNE teachers. In all cases, the rate of dropout depended on the number of SNE teachers in the school. In support of this, Jenny and Snell (2008) pointed out that, the depth and scope of the teachers training

are critical in determining the dropout rate of Learners with LD in a school. According to Meese (2002), a teacher with sufficient professional training in SNE, has the ability and competency to adapt the curriculum to suit learners with Learning Disabilities.

Research has also shown that the largest determinant of retention rate of learners with learning disabilities in schools in terms of teacher characteristics is the teacher's professional training and experience (Kirk, Gallagher, Anastasiow & Coleman, 2006). Learners with LD exhibit various styles of learning and require the services of a teacher trained in Special Needs Education capable of providing for the special needs learners with LD (Stuart, 2006).

3.4 Availability and use of teaching and learning resources

The objective was to determine the level of influence of availability of teaching and learning resources on dropout of learners with LD. The items that were used to collect data included questionnaire and a likert scale.

Table 11. Availability of teaching and learning resources

Resources	Adequate		Inadequate		N/A		Mean Score	
	F	%	F	%	F	%		%
Chalkboard	128	79	14	8.6	5	3.1	9.3	1.16
Written words	104	64.2	32	19.8	10	6.2	9.9	1.36
Text books	82	50.6	56	34.6	10	6.2	8.6	1.51
Charts	71	43.8	64	39.5	7	4.4	12.3	1.55
Diagrams	73	45.1	59	36.4	11	6.8	111.7	1.57
Flash cards	71	43.8	56	34.4	16	9.9	11.9	1.62
3-Dimensional object	33	24.1	68	42.0	33	20.4	13.8	1.96
Aurals	16	9.9	38	23.5	55	34.0	32.7	2.36
Audio visuals	14	8.6	3.9	24.1	83	61.2	16.0	2.51
Projectors	8	4.9	11	6.8	121	74.7	13.0	2.81

The Table shows availability of different categories of teaching and learning resources available in the learning environment according to the respondents. The teachers responses on availability and use of teaching and learning resources were as follows: Out of the number of teachers sampled 128 (79%) indicated that chalkboard was adequately available in their schools, 14 (8.6%) indicated that it was inadequate and 3.1% indicated that they were not available. This had a mean score of 1.16, which meant that chalkboard was the most available resource in the schools.

However, the indication by 5 (3.1%) teachers that chalk board was not available at all raised some concern because the researcher visited almost all the schools save for two and confirmed that in every school there was at least a blackboard for teachers to write on. Probably the respondents felt that by indicating that there were no chalkboards, the researcher could give some assistance.

As for written words (either on the, flash cards, charts or pupils exercise books, 104 (64.2%) responded that they were adequate, 32 (19.8%) indicated that they were inadequate and 10 (6.2%) indicated that they were not available. It had a mean score of 1.36 thus making it the second most adequately available teaching and learning resource in the schools. It should be noted that one of the areas in which learners with LD experience problems is reading and writing. Lerner (2006) emphasized that the use of the chalkboard and flash cards with written words provides enough practice for learners with LD due to their cognitive limitations. As for textbooks 82 (50.6%) of the respondents indicated that they were adequate, 56 (34.6%) indicated that they were inadequacy, 10 (6.2%) indicated that they were not available at all. This gave textbooks a mean score of 1.51 ranking it as the third most adequately available resource in the sampled schools. Charts and diagrams had a mean score of 1.55 and 1.62 respectively. Audio Visuals and projectors were the most inadequate

resources in the schools with the mean scores of 2.51 and 2.81 respectively. Only 39 (24.6%) and 14 (8.6%) of the teachers indicated that they were adequate with 121 (74.7%) indicating that they were not available.

Classroom observation by the researcher confirmed the use of teaching and learning resources.

Table 11. Use of Teaching and Learning resources observed in the classrooms

Type of resource	Adequate		Inadequate		None	
	N	%	N	%	N	%
Blackboard	15	93.75	1	6.25	0	0
Text books	14	85.7	2	12.5	0	0
Relia	13	81.25	3	18.75	0	0
Diagrams	11	68.75	2	12.5	3	18.75
Charts	9	56.25	4	25	3	18.75
3- dimensional	9	18.75	5	31.35	2	12.5
Flash Cards	4	25	9	56.25	3	18.75
Aurals	3	18.75	6	37.5	7	43.75
Projectors	1	6.25	1	6.25	14	85.7

The Table shows that out of the 16 lessons observed, 15 (93.75%) had adequate and 1 (6.25%) inadequate chalkboard. The chalkboard that was categorized as inadequate was a very small portable piece of board that could not accommodate the teachers' notes. In 14 (85.7%) lessons, it was observed that there were adequate text books and in 13 (81.25) of the lessons, it was observed that there were adequate relia and only in 2 (12.5%) of the lessons the relia were inadequate. In 11(68.75%) lessons teachers had adequate diagrams. Projector was only seen being used in 1 (6.25%) lesson.

The findings of the observations concurred with the teachers responses on availability of teaching and learning resources with very minimal variations.

It was also observed that the learning resources teachers used had very little influence on the learning of learners with LD because they were dull in color complicated and thus not attractive. Due to their cognitive limitations, learners with LD require less complex and colorful teaching learning resources to attract their attention (Lerner,2006).

Research has shown that teaching and learning resources generally enhances learning of learners with LD (Bender, 2002). Lerner (2006) observed that in teaching learners with LD, the resources would: (i) Form a focal point and attract attention (ii) a rouse interest and promote a desire to learn (iii) supplement and help to explain words and processes (iv) stimulate learners imagination to learn (v) help consolidate what has been learnt and save time. In essence, this means that teaching learning resources should facilitate learning for learners with LD and help attract them to school. However, the study revealed that teaching and learning resources had no influence on dropout of learners with LD and therefore did not reduce dropout rate..

Table 12. Influence of teaching and learning resources on dropout of LD learners

School	Teacher responses				Enrolment	Dropout	
	1 Adequate		2 inadequate			F	%
	F	%	F	%			
1	7	87.5	1	12.5	13	12	92.3
2	5	71.4	2	28.6	10	6	60
3	8	88.8	1	11.2	12	3	25
4	5	62.5	3	37.5	12	7	77.7
5	5	62.5	3	37.5	13	7	76.9
6	5	62.5	3	37.5	13	5	38.4
7	5	62.5	3	37.5	10	7	70.0
8	6	66.0	3	34.0	10	7	70.0
9	5	62.5	3	37.5	13	3	23.0

10	6	60.0	4	40	10	6	60.7
11	4	50.0	4	50	10	8	80.0
12	5	55.5	4	45.5	12	4	33.3
13	5	50.0	5	50	14	8	57.1
14	6	66.7	6	33.3	12	7	58.3
15	6	66.7	6	33.7	12	6	50
16		50	5	50	13	4	30.7
17	5	50	5	50	11	5	45.4
18	7	50	7	50	12	3	37.5

The Table above shows that schools, with adequate resources still experienced high

dropout rate. For instance in the school 1 with 8 teachers, 87.5% responded that there were adequate teaching and learning resources. However, the dropout rate in this school was 92.3%. Out of an enrolment of 13 learners with LD, 12 dropped out. In school 3, the number of respondents that indicated that teaching and learning resources was adequate was 5 out of a total of 8. This represented 88.8% of the respondents but still the dropout rate was as low as 25%. In school 11, the respondents that indicated that there were adequate resources were 4 out of 8 which represented 50%. The drop out rate in this school was still high (80%). Therefore, it was evident that either way, the dropout was not influenced by availability of teaching and learning resources. Ngaroga (2006) observed that if carefully selected, teaching and learning resources contribute to nurturing basic ideas and simplify the content. Lavine (2005) points out that the extent to which the teaching learning resource enhances learning to influence retention of learners with Learning Disabilities in school depends on their availability adaptability. It also requires a teacher with in-depth knowledge in Special Needs Education to select relevant resources for adaptation to attract learners with LD.

3.5 Parental support

The objective was to determine the level of influence of parental support on dropout of learners with learning disabilities. Data was collected data using likert scale and teachers questionnaire. Teachers were to indicate the extent of influence of various aspects of parental support whether to a Very Large Extent (VLE), Large Extent (LE), Small Extent (SE) or Not At All (NAA). Table 12.4 shows the teachers opinions on the influence of parental support on dropout of learners with LD.

Table 13. Teachers opinion on the influence of parental support on dropout.

Support	VLE		LE		SE		NA		Mean Score
	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%	
Basic needs	60	37.0	36	22.0	18	11.1	15	9.3	1.91
Praising the child	45	27.8	30	18.5	38	23.5	19	11.7	2.23
Buying materials	36	22.2	36	22.2	44	27.2	30	9.9	2.30
Taking positively	44	27.2	27	16.7	37	32.8	29	17.9	2.37
Paying school fees	34	27.0	31	19.1	42	25.9	24	14.8	2.43
Discussing the progress	58	35.8	29	17.9	29	17.0	20	12.3	2.54
Checking the child's work	28	17.5	29	16.7	57	36.2	22	13.6	2.55
Giving rewards	45	27.8	30	18.5	38	23.5	19	11.7	2.56
Escorting to school	43	26.5	37	22.8	34	21.0	26	16.0	2.57
Visiting at school	55	34.0	32	19.8	30	18.5	27	16.6	2.77
Revising with the child	42	25.9	43	26.5	21	13.0	25	15.4	2.79

KEY: VLE- Very Large Extent, LE- Large Extent, SE- Small Extent, NA- Not Applicable

The teachers responded as follows; Provision of basic needs, 37.0% of the teachers indicated that parental support influenced dropout of learners with learners with Learning Disabilities to a Very

Large Extent (VLE), 22.0% indicated that it influenced dropout to a Large Extent, 11.1% indicated that it influenced it to a Small Extent (SE), and 9.3% indicated that it did not influence it at all (NAA). It had mean score of 1.91. This rated it as the most influential aspect of parental support on dropout of learners with learning disabilities in the schools. Praising the learner had a mean score of 2.23 with 27.8% indicating it influenced dropout to a Very Large Extent, 18.5% indicated it influenced dropout to a Large Extent while 23.5% indicated it influenced dropout to a Small Extent. This had a mean score of 2.23 ranking it as the second most influential aspect of parental support. This concurred with Lerner (2006) who stated that learners with learning disabilities have low self-esteem and needs recognition and praise from their parents to succeed in learning.

Buying learning materials had a mean score of 2.30 with 22.2% and of the teachers indicating that, it influenced dropout of learners with LD to a Very Large Extent and to a Large Extent respectively. Talking positively about the learner and paying school fee for the learner had a mean score of 2.37 and 2.43 respectively. Other aspects of parental support such as discussing the child's progress with the teachers, checking the child's, giving tangible rewards and visiting the child at school all invariably influenced dropout to a small extent. In the view of the respondents the aspect of revising with the child at home influenced dropout by 42% to a Very large extent, 43% to a large extent and 21% to a small extent giving it a mean score of 2.79 and making least influential aspect of parental support. This suggested that parents nurture a negative attitude towards their children with LD. Meese (2006) concurs by pointing out that most parents of learners with learning disabilities lacks confidence in their children's ability to perform a task and may not see the benefit of spending time with them to do their work. In support of this view, Meyer and Hammil (2002) also observed that parents go through a mourning process when first told that their child has a learning disability and that the mourning period persists for a long time creating a cloud of doubt about the child's potentiality. This effectively erodes the parents' confidence in the child. However, O'Hara and Levy (2004) observed that parents are critical in convincing their children with LD that they are not stupid or lazy that they need to persist in their schoolwork in the face of their academic failure.

The study found out that every aspect of parental support influences dropout of learners with LD to some extent. Kirk et al (2005) supported this view by stating that parental support is critical in influencing dropout of learners with LD and may adversely influence dropout rate. A child with LD that receives absolute parental support in terms of emotional and physical needs can precede with his/her education and emerge from school years academically, emotionally and socially intact as well as prepared for challenges ahead (O'Hara & Levy, 2004). As stated by Meyer and Hammil (2002), the job of a parent of a child with LD is not to cure the condition but to give the social and emotional tools he/she needs to work through challenges of a learning environment. They further added that parents play an important role on how their children with Learning Disabilities perceive and cope with school and the decisions they make. As the first teachers of the child, parents can provide intellectual stimulation, emotional well-being, and development of self-concept, self-esteem and the motivation to learn (Levine, 2003) The study revealed that in schools where parents supported their learners with LD, the dropout was reduced and in schools where parental support was lacking the dropout was high. Table 13.4 shows the influence of parental support on dropout of learners with in schools. In the table N represents the number of teachers, Yes indicates schools with parental support and No represents schools with no parental support

Table 14. Influence of parental support on dropout of learners with Learning Disabilities.

Schools	Response		Enrollment		Dropout		
	Yes	%	No	%		%	
1	1	12.5	7	87.5	13	12	92.3
2	2	28.8	5	71.5	10	1	60
3	7	77.8	2	77.7	12	3	25
4	3	37.5	5	62.5	12	7	77.7
5	2	25	6	75	13	7	76.9
6	5	62.5	3	62.5	13	5	28.4

7	3	77.8	5	62.5	10	7	70
8	2	22.2	7	77.7	10	7	70
9	1	12.5	7	87.5	13	3	23
10	4	40	6	60	10	6	60.7
11	1	12.5	7	87.5	10	8	80
12	7	77.7	2	77.7	12	4	33.3
13	4	40	6	60	14	8	57.1
14	2		6	75	12	7	58.3
15	4	25	6	60	12	6	50
16	7	70	3	70	13	4	30.7
17	5	50	5	50	11	5	45.4
18	10	71.4	4	71.4	12	3	25

In school 1 for instance, 87% of the respondents indicated that learners with LD received no parental support and the dropout rate was high (92.3%). Out of an enrollment of 13 learners with LD, 12 dropped out. But in school 3, 77% of the teachers indicated that there was parental support and the dropout was low (25%). Again in schools 6 and 9 it shows there was no parental and the dropout was low 38.4% and 23% respectively. This was the same again in school 16 and 18 where the dropout rates were 30.7% and 37.5%. In all the schools where teachers indicated that there was no parental support the dropout rate was high. Lerner (2006) observed that the support given to learners with LD by their parents outweighs that of the teacher, counselor and therapist and can make the difference in retention rate. Educating a child with learning Disabilities is challenging but it may also be rewarding Heward (Lyon, G.R, 2003). Parents of children with learning disabilities should be inspired by living examples of eminent persons such as Albert Einstein the mathematical genius, Nelson Rockefeller who was once the vice President of USA, Thomas Edison, the inventor of the Electric bulb who in spite of having severe learning reading disabilities (dyslexia) became prominent and succeeded in life. Probably there success was as a result of parental support.

Parental support to learners with Learning Disabilities should be encouraged to reduce their chances of dropping out of school. This would make them to become contributors to national growth of the Kenyan society and the world

4. Conclusions

The study made the following conclusions:

- (i) The first objective was to determine the influence of curriculum adaptation on dropout of learners with LD. The study concluded that lack of adaptation of curriculum influenced dropout rate.
- (ii) The second objective was to establish the influence of teaching methods on the dropout of learners with LD. The study concluded that inability by the teachers to use special teaching methods recommended for teaching learners with LD in regular classrooms had influenced on dropout rate.
- (iii) The third objective was to find out the influence of teacher attributes on the dropout of learners with LD. The study concluded that teacher's attributes had influence on dropout rate of learners with LD.
- (iv) The fourth objective was to establish the influence of learning and teaching resources on the dropout of learners with LD. The study concluded that teaching and learning resources had no influence on dropout rate.
- (v) The fifth objective was to determine the influence of parental support. The study concluded that parental support was critical in retention rate of learners with LD.

5. Recommendations

In light of the findings outlined herein, the following recommendations were made.

- (i) All teachers in regular primary school should be trained in Special Needs education to be able to adapt the regular school curriculum to enhance learning of learners with LD.
- (ii) Teachers teaching in regular primary schools should use special teaching methods to enhance the learning of learners with LD.
- (iii) Teachers teaching in regular primary schools with LD learners should be evaluated to ensure that they have positive attitude towards the learners.
 - (i) Teaching and learning resources should be adapted to enhance learning of learners with LD.
 - (ii) Parents should be sensitized on the importance of supporting their children.

6. Suggestion for further research

In this study, some factors have not been properly accounted for due to its scope. It is therefore suggested that further research should be done on some topics related to this one. In this regard, the following are recommended for further research. In the are of dropout of learners with LD.

- (i) To determine the dropout of learner with LD in regular primary schools
- (ii) To establish the challenges facing teachers in curriculum adaptation.
- (iii) To find out the relevance of primary teacher training syllabus in relation to Special Needs Education.
- (iv) To determine challenges faced by parents of children with LD

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