

**PSYCHOSOCIAL CHALLENGES AND COUNSELING INTERVENTIONS FOR
LEARNERS WITH SPECIAL NEEDS IN SELECTED INCLUSIVE PRIMARY
SCHOOLS IN NJORO SUB COUNTY OF NAKURU COUNTY, KENYA**

JESSE KIMANI

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Requirements for the Award of Master of Education Degree in Guidance and
Counseling of Egerton University**

EGERTON UNIVERSITY

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DECLARATION AND RECOMMENDATION

Declaration

I declare that this research is my original work and has not been presented for examination in this University or any other institution for the award of diploma, degree or any other certificate.

Signature.....

Date:

Jesse Kimani.

EM16/2565/10

Recommendation

This research report has been submitted for examination with my approval as a University Supervisor.

Signature.....

Date:

Prof. M.C. Chepchieng

Department of Psychology, Counseling and Educational Foundations.

Egerton University.

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DEDICATION

This work is dedicated to my family: My beloved wife Purity and children, Hope, Joy and Agape for their continued support and encouragement when I was undertaking this research. May God bless them richly and make them great scholars.

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My heartfelt gratitude goes to the Almighty God for giving me the ability to pursue this Master's Degree Course. Other gratitude goes to Egerton University for laying a firm foundation for my studies, not forgetting the entire academic and subordinate staff of the Department of Psychology, Counseling and Educational Foundation for their advice and timely support in the course of carrying out this research. Special and sincere gratitude goes to my supervisor Prof. M.C. Chepchieng for the guidance, encouragement, knowledge, skills and professional advice he accorded me in the course of my studies. I hereby wish to acknowledge the effort made by my son Hope in fueling my desire to study when he was in kindergarten. Honest appreciation goes to Pastors, my entire family, Njuguna, Omena, teachers, Head teachers, Education Officers from Njoro Sub County and anybody else who made this work to be a success. May God bless them abundantly.

ABSTRACT

Globally, challenges facing learners with special needs and their counseling interventions have been of great concern to educationists and other well wishers. The Kenya government and education stakeholders have joined the world in defending the rights of persons with disabilities. In the process, they have come up with strategies for dealing with the learners' special concerns although the issues of psychosocial challenges and counseling remedies are still impending. The purpose of this study was to identify psychosocial challenges faced by the learners and come up with counseling interventions to be used by all education stakeholders. The study adopted the descriptive survey design which was suitable because it is designed to obtain precise information concerning current status of phenomena and to draw valid conclusions from the facts discovered. The target population comprised 51,775 people while the accessible population comprised 10,200 learners in all the inclusive Primary Schools in the Sub County, 10 Education Officers and 40 Teachers. The sample size consisted of 100 pupils from one private and two public primary schools, five Education officers and 20 class teachers. The education officers and the teachers were purposively sampled while the children were selected using stratified random sampling technique. Quantitative data was collected in the targeted schools using questionnaires while qualitative data was collected using interview schedule which was conducted among selected respondents. Validity of the instruments was ensured by use of experts' judgment from the department of Psychology, counseling and Education Foundations. A pilot study was conducted to ensure reliability of the instruments where a coefficient of 0.702 was obtained by using Cronbach's Alpha Method. The study used descriptive statistics such as frequencies, means and percentages when analyzing data. Analysis of qualitative data was done by identifying the key substantive points and putting them into exhaustive and exclusive categories. Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) version 17.0 for windows was used in data analysis. The study revealed that learners in inclusive Primary Schools have diverse special needs, face psychosocial challenges such as withdrawal which require well programmed guidance and counseling services. The study concluded that psychosocial challenges exist among learners with special needs and that counseling interventions have not been put fully resulting to minimal effects on the learners. The study recommended integration of counseling services in all subjects, better remuneration and employment of trained staff and adjustment of education policies to meet learners' needs.

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS

AIDS	:	Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome.
HIV	:	Human Immune Deficiency Virus.
ICT	:	Information Communication Technology.
KCPE	:	Kenya Certificate of Primary Education.
KESSP	:	Kenya Education Sector Support Programme.
KISE	:	Kenya Institute of Special Education.
MOEST	:	Ministry of Education Science and Technology.
NESSP	:	National Education Sector Support Programs
SPSS	:	Statistical Packages for Social Sciences.
SSO	:	Sub County Staffing Officer.
TIQET	:	Totally Integrated Quality Education and Training.
UK	:	United Kingdom.
UNICEF	:	United Nations Children’s Education Fund.
UNISE	:	Uganda Institute of Special Education.
UNPF	:	United Nations Population Fund.
USAID	:	United States Agency of International Development.

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background of the Study

The birth of a child with a disability or an emergence of a disability case affects the child's development and presents challenges to parents, the child itself, communities and education stakeholders globally, regionally and locally (Ngure & Mwangi, 2007). The challenges therein include economic, social, health and community attitudes which manifest themselves as psychosocial challenges. The problems are magnified by cultural beliefs on disabilities due to identifiable physical features, motor and cognitive limitations as well as self deprivations. This results to peers, teachers and the community responding to learners with special needs through rejection, segregation, fear, disapproval and disappointment (Andolo, 2006).

Globally, learners with special needs who go through collective violence by peers or other individuals experience dire psychosocial consequences and lack of proper guidance and counseling. This leads to feelings of hopelessness, ineffectiveness and shame hence the need for inclusive education practices worldwide. According to Randiki (2002), continents such as North and South America, Europe and Africa have come up with modalities of curbing the situation. In North and South America, Countries such as Argentina and Canada have embraced inclusive learning with great success. Several inclusionary practices are however developed such as learning environment model where learning facilities and support services are provided. Learners with special needs learn with their peers but are normally separated and assisted in a resource room when need arises. Cooperative teaching programs are also used by qualified personnel. The teaching methodology and teaching presentation approaches are modified to suit the entire class. In spite of these, inclusion practices in Argentina are hindered by overstretched facilities, poverty rates, gender disparities, rigid curriculum, a homogeneous approach of training teachers, lack of proper evaluation and promotion criteria for learners with special needs. Further study by the same scholar showed that in Europe, countries such as Britain, Norway and Denmark practice inclusive education effectively. For instance, Norway and Britain have shown remarkable success in the inclusionary Educational practices. This has been made practical by issuing effective assessment, placement,

monitoring and evaluation of learners with special needs. The British government takes care of the learners' financial needs through pupils' retention grants. It also constructs new schools and modifies old buildings taking cognizance of the learners' special needs. Parents are actively involved and there is also an on-going retraining of teachers with the aim of equipping them with modern teaching practices responsive to the needs of a diversity of learners.

In Norway, teachers interact with learners with special needs on a one to one basis because of the average class size of 20 pupils. Education providers have also put in place a lot of room for flexibility and variation in terms of range of content, activities, classroom organization and teaching period. Learners with special needs have ample time to concentrate on relevant tasks resulting to them completing the compulsory education cycle. In Denmark, teacher trainees are prepared in advance to handle any child in the inclusive settings irrespective of their diverse and peculiar needs (Fish, 1995).

A Study by Ndurumo (1993) noted that inclusive Education practices in Africa are found in South Africa, Lesotho, Uganda and Kenya. Inclusion of learners with special needs in primary schools in these countries is hindered by: poverty, lack of specialized personnel, insufficient educational resources, lack of barrier free environment, negative attitudes towards disabilities, high teacher-pupil ratio, rigid curriculum and unfriendly National examinations. Inclusive practice in South Africa emerged successively as a result of appointing qualified and willing officers to key positions in the education sector. The officers had gotten the expertise in Europe and America while in exile and therefore transformed the system of education in South Africa from an exclusive perspective to a more inclusive type. However, the implementers of inclusive education continue to face challenges which include: high teacher pupil ratio, teachers' unpreparedness, stereotype attitude of able bodied people, inadequate support staff and inability to buy specialized equipment due to high poverty levels (Ndurumo, 1993). The scholar further reported that inclusive practice in Lesotho has taken root with the establishment of more than 10 inclusive schools. The programme was initially funded by the United States of America International Development Agency. Like in most developing Countries, inclusive education in Lesotho is derailed by high poverty levels, homogenous approach of training teachers, tendency to favor best children and those from

high social economic backgrounds. This indicates the need to look at the general education reform and to address issues of access and equality for all children.

Acceleration of Inclusive Education practices in Uganda is pegged on positive political goodwill, impact of universal policy, a move towards Education for All, provision of free compulsory education for four children whereby a child with challenges takes first position followed by girl child and others in school admission and care (UNESCO, 1994). According to Randiki (2002), Uganda provides capital for school development, skilled manpower and good arrangement within the school to accommodate learners with special needs in inclusive settings. Further study by the same scholar showed that in Kenya, the Ministry of Science and Technology has developed inclusive education practices in the country with few Sub Counties embracing them. This has been made possible with the aid of some non governmental organizations and churches. Thus Kenya has not fully implemented Jomtien Declaration of Education for All (EFA) 1990 that recommended education of all children regardless of their individual differences. A good example of institutions which have embraced inclusive learning is Oriang Primary School in HomaBay Sub County which was started by Leonard Chesire Foundation from (UK). The institution has succeeded in implementing the programs by bringing teaching and learning resources in a centralized pool for usage.

Meru Sub County has also received the inclusionary practices positively by adjusting school curriculum and environment to match the needs of learners with special needs and their peers. As a whole, inclusive Education practice in Kenya has accelerated since the introduction of Universal Primary Education (UPE) and the implementation of Free Primary Education (FPE) which has attracted high enrollment in public schools (KESSP, 2005-2010). This calls for immense demand for services for children with special needs at all levels in Kenya.

The main challenges facing learners with special needs relate to access to educational resources, equity of perception by the able bodied individuals, rigid curriculum and inadequate skills to identify, assess and assist the learners. All these constraints have led to psychosocial challenges in learners with special needs which require guidance and counseling intervention strategies. Njoro Sub County which is the main focus of the study is affected by

these issues which pose dire psychosocial and counseling demands. The counseling intervention carried out in Njoro Primary Schools is inadequate due to lack of skilled personnel in the field. Further still, inclusive practices in Njoro inclusive schools are compounded by poor staff development, irregular financial allocation, insufficient assessment and wanting placement opportunities which do not account for diversity (Njoro Sub county Education Office, 2013). According to the Ministry of Education Strategic Plan (2006-2011), the implementation of inclusive learning in all Primary Schools has led to high enrolment in Schools posing psychosocial challenges to the special population which require to be addressed. The high population in Schools has resulted to overstretched facilities, inadequate specialized personnel, overcrowding in schools, diminished community support and the high pupil- teacher ratio. These issues highlighted thereof need to be curbed and therefore prompted the researcher to carry out the research as these require novel, guidance and counseling intervention measures.

1.2 Statement of the Problem

Despite the government's effort to bring inclusive education practices in Kenya, learners with special needs particularly those in inclusive settings manifests various psychological and social challenges that require counseling interventions. For decades, learners with special needs in Njoro Sub County Primary Schools have had inadequate counseling interventions and manifests psychosocial challenges. Further results from Njoro Education Office indicated that learners in School D had psychosocial challenges and counseling issues emanating from special needs such as specific learning difficulties and severe learning difficulties which is a common feature in the study area. This has contributed to the pupils' dismal performance in their academic and daily activities. This was made evident by the 2013 KCPE results which ranked the school last in Njoro Sub County with a mean score of 168.12. Though the Government through the Ministry of Education Science and Technology encourages counseling in learning Institutions, these services have not been offered in the Kenya Primary schools. Hence learners with special needs still suffer psychosocial challenges and counseling challenges imposed on them by the able-bodied learners, teachers and other members of the community. If the psychosocial challenges are not met, the learners' livelihood will be affected negatively. The researcher therefore found it necessary to conduct the research in Njoro Sub County since no study has been done to address the psychosocial challenges and

the counseling interventions in inclusive schools. This in return will enable the children cope with their peers, academic performance and interpersonal relationship.

1.3 Purpose of the Study

The study intended to identify the psychosocial challenges faced by disabled learners and come up with counseling interventions to be used by all education stakeholders.

1.4 Objectives of the Study

The objectives of the study envisaged to:

- i. Establish types of special needs found in learners in the inclusive Primary Schools of Njoro Sub County.
- ii. Determine the psychosocial challenges faced by learners with special needs in inclusive Primary Schools of Njoro Sub County.
- iii. To establish the counseling interventions accorded to learners with special needs in inclusive Primary Schools of Njoro Sub County.

1.5 Research Questions

To achieve the objectives of the study, the researcher used the following research questions:-

- i. Which types of special needs are found in learners in Njoro Sub county inclusive Primary Schools?
- ii. What psychosocial challenges face learners with special needs in inclusive Primary Schools of Njoro Sub County?
- iii. What counseling interventions are accorded to learners with special needs in inclusive Primary Schools of Njoro Sub County?

1.6 Significance of the Study

Findings of the research were expected to change the attitudes of teachers, parents and other caregivers when assisting learners with diverse special needs. It was also aimed at raising the children's self esteem and assisting the government in eradicating the psychosocial challenges which face the children through counseling by organizing resources, facilities and manpower. Curriculum developers are hoped to come up with an adjusted curriculum which meet the learners' needs and create room for employment of effective counseling intervention

strategies in primary schools. The study sought to generate ideas, knowledge and skills to be used by all Education stakeholders, caregivers and future researchers in designing and monitoring intervention programs for learners with special needs.

1.7 Scope of the Study

The study was carried out in Njoro Sub County Primary Schools of Nakuru County which has different categories of inclusive schools namely public day schools and private boarding schools. This therefore provided a fertile ground for the study. The study was strictly confined to teachers, education officers and pupils with special needs in selected private and public inclusive settings where psychosocial challenges and counseling interventions were identified. The class 6-8 pupils were chosen because they were in a position of expressing themselves well and able to fill in the questionnaire.

1.8 Limitations of the Study

- i. Respondents tended to give socially acceptable responses due to stereotype attitude, school culture and their level of understanding of learners with special needs. The researcher overcame the limitation by comparing data obtained from the various respondents.
- ii. Learners' cultural values and religious factors prevented them from airing their views openly. However, the limitations were addressed by ensuring the learners maximum confidentiality and through questionnaires and interview schedule given respectively to the teachers and the education officers trained in handling learners with special needs in Njoro Sub County.

1.9 Assumptions of the Study

The study was guided by the following assumptions:-

- i. The study assumed that the respondents provided honest, pertinent and relevant answers to research questions.
- ii. That all the selected respondents in the study were a reasonable representation of the targeted people in Njoro Sub County.
- iii. That the teachers and Education officers had knowledge pertaining to pupils with special needs.

1.10 Operational Definitions of Terms

The following terms were defined according to their usage within the context of this study.

Challenge – This is a condition or barrier which inhibits normal functioning of an individual with special needs.

Counseling – This is a process in which a counselee having an identified emotional problem is helped by a professional counselor to see his or her problem in order to come up with workable remedies of solving the problem at hand (Hiuhu, 2008).

Counseling Interventions – Are the strategies a counselor uses to assist counsees in identifying their problems and then show them how to cope with those life barriers (Ng'ang'a, 2008).

Cultural factors– These are factors which emanate from cultural backgrounds and were guided by cultural norms, demands, prohibitions and models (Ong'era, 2003)

Curriculum – This is content or knowledge organized for instructions in a certain time frame.

Disability – Is a condition which makes an individual not to function normally in a particular social cultural context with respect to age or sex. In this study it will mean the aspect in human beings which hinder learning.

Emotionally and behavioral disordered children- These are children who show undesirable behavior related to indiscipline and disobedience which affect the children and those around them (Ong'era, 2003).

Gifted and Talented Children–These are learners with superior intellectual qualities who demonstrate evidence of high performance in creativity, leadership and academic work (MOEST, 2007).

Hearing Impaired – These are learners with partial hearing or those whose sense of hearing is functionally defective requiring other methods of communication such as sign language.

Hyperactivity – A state where the child is constantly on move, fidgety, restless and cannot sit still at one place for a long time (Birichi & Rukungu, 2010).

Inclusive setting- This is a situation where all learners including those with special needs and those without disabilities participate in all activities in a community. The settings involve inclusive education where learners' needs are met within the mainstream of education using all the available resources and by adjusting school curriculum and the environment.

Influence – To affect the way something happens.

Interventions - These are the services given to persons with special needs to help them cope better with their life issues.

Intervention Strategies – These are methods and techniques used in teaching learners with special needs.

Need – It is a deficiency in a requirement. In this study it is a requirement whose absence in children hinders learning.

Psychosocial– This is a concept which encompasses the complex nature of a child’s physical and mental development. These emanates from the close interplay of psychological and social aspects of cognitive plus emotional growth of individuals which precipitates differential in performance for learners with special needs when compared with their peers.

Psychosocial challenges – These are the limitations found in learners with special needs as a result of maltreatment in the society. In this study, these will refer to self devaluation, withdrawal, rejection, self pity, sadness and despair.

School Management – Individuals charged with the responsibility of coordinating and assessing the daily activities of inclusive schools.

Self devaluation –This is the state of children feeling inferior or having low self esteem due to past and present experiences of shame and rejection eroding their dignity and self worth.

Special needs- These are conditions found in learners characterized by performance and behavior which deviates from the normal. These needs require specialized education programs in order to address them.

Rejection – The non acceptance of learners with special needs by peers and caregivers due to negative attitude, hostility and criticism which precipitates emotional disturbance of the learner.

Visual Impairment- This is a condition in a learner which affects his or her ability to see clearly. The term includes both partial seeing and blindness.

Withdrawal – This is the act of ceasing to participate in daily activities and associating with peers and other people as a result of discomfort distress or stress associated with certain needs not being met. A withdrawn child fears failure, embarrassment, criticism or humiliation (Birichi & Rukungu, 2010).

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Introduction

This chapter reviews literature relevant to this study in order to put the write up in context of other similar researches. Discussed herein are: types of children with special needs, the psychosocial challenges faced by the adolescent disabled, the hearing impaired, the visually impaired, the gifted and talented learners, the physically impaired, the emotionally and behavioral disordered, those living under difficult circumstances and the prevalence of learners with special needs. This chapter terminates with an exposition of, counseling intervention measures, theoretical framework and a conceptual framework.

2.2 Types of Learners with Special Needs

Children with special needs are defined as those who exhibit several specific conditions that results in their need for specialized education to facilitate, social, emotional and academic development (Mwaura 2001). Generally, the children display challenges in areas such as learning, social skills, memory, problem solving and adaptive behavior (Ngugi, 2003). The different types of special needs include: the psychologically different, multiply impaired, those with specific learning difficulties and those with communication disorders.

According to MOEST report (2007), the gifted and talented learners fall in the type of learners with superior intellectual qualities. The learners demonstrate evidence of high performance in areas such as creativity, leadership, and specific academic abilities better than their peers. The study asserted further that the learners require services or activities not ordinarily provided for the average learners. This group of children is further classified into gifted learners, talented learners, creative learners and that of the highly motivated ones. Further study by MOEST (2007) classified learners with emotional and behavioral disorders into those with social problems, conduct disorders, juvenile delinquency, aggression, attention deficit and hyperactive disorders. The learners were found to face problems stemming from society's stigmatization, rejection and discrimination among others.

Study by Gargiulo (2006) showed specific learning difficulty as another type of learners with special concerns characterized by disorders in one or more of the basic psychological processes involved in understanding or using written or spoken language. The disorder may manifest itself in an imperfect ability to listen, think, read, write, spell or do computation tasks. According to the study, the term includes conditions such as perceptual impairments, brain injury and developmental appraisal. These groups of learners seem to have the ability to perform learning activities, yet they do not perform as expected. Further research by Mwaura and Wanyera (2007) noted that the learners develop slowly intellectually than their peers. In overstretched classes, teachers may fail to give children adequate attention in indoor and outdoor activities resulting to children developing some forms of learning disabilities. Children with specific learning difficulties get tired quickly, experience health problems like epilepsy, forget taught concepts easily and fail to master academic subjects. They also have academic related difficulties manifested in wrong spellings, not handing in assignments in time, copying from fellow peers, unable to answer questions appropriately, being shy and having inconsistent results in examinations and tests. All these difficulties results in psychosocial challenges which calls for effective counseling strategies which are not provided in inclusive primary schools (Randiki, 2002). This includes Njoro Sub County where this study was conducted.

Turbull et al. (2013) noted learners with speech and language impairment as another type of impairment manifested by a communication disorder that adversely affect the children's ability to talk, understand, read and write. This disability can be classified into speech and language disorder. The speech impaired learners have articulation, voice and fluency disorders. Articulation disorders are shown by omission of words, for instance 'bo' for boat and letters substations for example 'Wabboit' for rabbit. Learners in this category distort words, for example 'shlip' for slip. Fluency disorders are manifested by rhythm and speech timing difficulties characterized by hesitations, repetitions, prolongation of sounds, syllables, words or phrases (Andolo, 2006).

Studies done by Ngure and Mwangi (2007) identified those with physical, psychological disorders and neuron-skeletal impairment as the other type of children with special concerns. This type includes the health impaired, the visually handicapped, the hearing impaired,

physically impaired and the multiply disabled. These groups encounter difficulty in accessing educational resources and facilities due to the physical barriers imposed on them by the society in the name of beautifying the environment.

Most learners with psychological challenges are educated in custodial classes. In developed countries, the children are exposed to a functional curriculum which equips them with skills for daily living and adaptation of the school environment. They are given tasks that are easy to handle. When in inclusive settings, the learners are taught using cooperative and collaborative methodology. The teachers also use various forms of supporting the children through cognitive approach (Gargulo, 2009). These services are not available in Njoro Sub County which is the main area of study.

Ormrod (2003) enumerated autism, attention – deficit, hyperactivity (ADHD) and multiple disabilities as other types of learners with speech problems. According to her, learners with attention deficit (hyperactivity) have difficulties in settling on given tasks; poses frequent hyperactive activities and display impulsive behavior. Further, Ormrod (2003) defined autism as a condition marked by varying degrees of impaired social, interaction, repetitive behaviors and restricted interest. The study further deemed learners with emotional or behavioral disorders to be presenting disrupted academic learning and performance decline.

Learners with special needs have undergone psychosocial challenges and counseling constraints since the period of neglect in 17th century, private tuition in 18th century, institutionalization in the 19th century, separation of learners in the 20th century, normalization and inclusion times. Consequently, persons with disabilities have been isolated and their needs ignored resulting to the pupils suffering rejection and neglect (Randiki, 2002).

2.3 Challenges Faced by the Adolescent Disabled Learners in the Inclusive Settings

Ngure and Mwangi (2007) noted that the exceptional adolescent child experience increased sexual drive due to hormonal changes and exclusion from most educational, economic and cultural opportunities. They also highlighted the menace encountered by the adolescents due to female ovulation and ejaculation of semen by male sexual organs.

This causes embarrassment and interferes with the learners' cognitive changes leading to them having low self esteem envisaged during dating. The two scholars postulated that the youngsters aim at achieving high education, owning property, having money and gaining recognition. Failure to achieve the above mentioned things lead to withdrawal, frustrations and sheltered vision leading to the affected loosing value in positive contribution in the society. They further observed that adolescent girls get frustrated due to undue pleasure imposed on them by self, parents, teachers, siblings and the society at large. Stigma is also caused on the learners by classmates and teachers due to grouping of learners according to their weaknesses. The learners therefore suffer laziness and idleness emanating from wonderment. It is on the bases of this that the researcher finds it necessary for proper guidance and counseling measures to be put in place in primary schools in order to curb these psychosocial challenges.

According to Commonwealth Fund survey in 1997, adolescent girls are challenged by social messages that bombard them on daily basis. Such messages may be sourced from media, popular teen's magazines, televisions and video shows which display discrepancies between exceptional and non exceptional teens. Girls are more likely than boys to be depressed by demands and challenges related to maturation (Mwathi, 1998).

Article 23 of the United Nations Convention of the Rights of children (UNICEF, 2000) noted that the adolescent disabled children lack basic sex education, are socially isolated, discriminated and dealt with prejudice by the able bodied learners and education stakeholders. The study further observed that the learners are denied autonomy in decision making as a result of gender, ethnic, religious and cultural barriers. This in turn compounds the learners' ability in accessing different services and advocacy rendered to their peers. This phenomenon is rampant to adolescents with physical, sensory, intellectual or mental disabilities. UNICEF (2000), report further asserted that some of the adolescent disabled are physically, sexually and socially molested by some teachers, subordinate staffs and their colleagues who see them as easy prey.

Postulations of Osakinle and Adegoroye (2008) identified sex, unsuitable environment, religious affiliation, school influence (curriculum content and peer), child rearing and family

values as factors or challenges which influences adolescent's choice of career and other opportunities.

It is on the basis of these issues that the research opted to identify learners' counseling interventions and psychosocial challenges. Preventive counseling should hence be accorded to the adolescents to curb premarital sex, drug and substance abuse (Ngure & Mwangi, 2007). Further still, the learners are taught how to develop self acceptance, join supportive groups, peer counseling, self disclosure, combating sources of stigma and discrimination. The practice of inclusion in the inclusive settings for learners with special needs has resulted to the learners with special needs experiencing psychosocial challenges and counseling problems since the inception of Free Primary Education and Education for All. This is caused by overstretched facilities, shortage of specialized personnel, overcrowding in schools, high pupil-teacher ratios in densely populated areas and diminished community support (Randiki, 2002). This therefore inspired the researcher to carry out the study with the aim of averting the situation through guidance and counseling intervention strategies.

2.4 Problems Faced by the Hearing Impaired

Linus (1986) asserted that the hearing impaired suffers excessive discrimination by their peers and community. The children do not understand conventional language nor grasp linguistically based concepts. Those with minimal hearing loss have difficulty hearing spoken language at a distance or in the presence of background noise. Both of these conditions are present in classrooms and significantly affect the learners negatively. The learners are unable to gain information about themselves and the world around them, inhibit development of communication skills and identification of environmental clues (Gargulo, 2009). It was further observed that some teachers fail to assert and understand the children denying them socialization and freedom. Those facing otitis media experience rejection and scolding from their peers and siblings. Kimani (2003) further observed that some pupils experience tenacious noises within the head which result in nervousness or irritability. The pupils experience frequent colds, sour throat and recurring tonsillitis. The above condition inhibits proper concentration and leads to strained learning. The children confuse consonants for instance p for b and d for t. They have poor articulations while others have fluency and voice disorders.

Report given by Lucker and Bowen (2006) revealed that developed continents such as United States of America give learners with hearing impairment special treatment which is not common in developing countries like Kenya. In United States of America the children are screened at early years to find their hearing loss, auditory therapy done, the children are put in inclusive schools where specialized treatment is given. The children in return acquire a sense of belonging, personal identification and acceptance as opposed to those learners who are found in the area of this study.

Ng'ang'a (2008) postulated that the individuals perceive instructions poorly and hence answer questions wrongly. According to the survey conducted by the Ministry of Education (2007), the teaching and learning resources do not meet the needs of the hearing impaired. However, studies done by Ngure and Mwangi (2007) showed that the child can be assisted through minimizing general noise in class and providing written notes. The teachers and other instructors should talk at normal speed and in clear tones for the pupils to hear.

Developmental counseling for self development, self direction, self understanding, self reliance and responsibilities to choice and action should be given. Children should be assisted in listing their issues in order of priorities and translating them into viable goals and actions.

2.5 Challenges Facing the Visually Impaired Pupils

Gear-heart (1984) revealed that the visually impaired are unable to accomplish examinations and class work in time. He further observed that those with partial vision are given hard tasks such as telling time from the normal clock faces. They are reprimanded and labeled as learners with disruptive behavior. They suffer glare problems and struggle in acquiring verbal instructions because the classes are not acoustic. The children have difficulty in grasping study materials moved in front of them.

A totally blind child has difficulties in making lasting friends and exhibiting social skills due to inability to read body language compared to their peers. The children feel discouraged, lack independence as they have to be guided by sighted guards. Some pupils complain of frequent headaches, dizziness, nausea and eye pains following close facial work (Kirk & Gallagher, 2003). In order to avert the situation, counseling services should be provided so as

to help the learners use tactual materials and listening process (Ngugi, 2007). Learners with visual challenges still encounter psychosocial and counseling problems since the schools lack proper inclusion and assimilation of this group of learners. This information is supported by studies done by Randiki (2002) which noted that the schools lack preschool departments where training and stimulation of the children can take place. The same studies observed the need for in service courses, construction of resource centers and creating awareness of the disability to the general public. Children with eye diseases such as glaucoma often have headaches and require frequent periods of rest which is not common in inclusive schools. The scholar also noted that some children have stress and emotional problems associated with inability to read and see far distanced objects. The Optometric Extension Program Foundation (2007) asserted that the children experience challenges such as frustrations caused by use of defective optical devices, loneliness which affects the child's emotional and social facets, insufficient time to accomplish class work which is not provided in inclusive primary schools.

Gargulo (2009) postulated that learners with visual impairment should be well counseled and an expanded core curriculum be developed to avert the learners challenges. This type of curriculum include use of: compensatory skills, social skills, independent living skills, recreation and leisure skills, career education, assistive technology, visual efficiency skills and self determination which are lacking in inclusive schools.

2.6 Psychosocial Problems Encountered by the Gifted and Talented Children.

Gargulo (2009) in his studies found out that the gifted and talented children face emotional, socialization and educational problems. Unskilled teachers resent or ignore the learners deeming them as bossy pupils. Their learning needs are often not met resulting to them being inattentive and restless when they lack challenging work. They then become passive learners and ignore answering cheap questions. Some unskilled teachers who feel insecure brand the learners as rude, unruly and as the undisciplined lot. The pupils have poor handwriting because their thoughts come faster than they can write. These conditions lead to the children acquiring frustrations, withdrawal, rejection, stigmatization and poor stimulation.

Mwaura and Wanyera (2007) noted that the gifted and talented learners find class work and activities meant for their age group to be too easy and too boring for them. Such learners find themselves dominating group discussions due to their unique mental abilities. This does not augur well with their peers. This therefore leads to them engaging themselves in disruptive behavior in class. Further study by the two scholars verified that learners with superior abilities are assisted by giving them relevant and challenging literature which captures their attention. Kise and Unise (2000) reported that due to the learners' high intelligence and motivation, they do not fit well with their peers. This results to the pupils being unable to develop positive interpersonal relationships and become withdrawn or loners.

Piirto (2007) reported that the children suffer psychosocial challenges since the teachers view them as challenging individuals, demanding, intense, critical, oversensitive, highly verbal, physically active and therefore present needs for special services which inclusive schools are not prepared to meet. The same study showed that the learners dislike routines, are risk takers, sensitive and empathetic, strive for perfection, are intrinsically motivated, self confident, have concern for justice and idealism. The children need individualized instructions, a differentiated curriculum and counseling services which meet their needs, interests and abilities. The study further observed that some teachers find the learners challenging and often misinterpret their behavior.

Studies by Davis and Rimm (2004) showed that learners with disabilities who are gifted and talented are overlooked and seldom thought of possessing superior abilities. This could be due to biases, prejudices and stereotypic expectations that prevent other people from seeing their strengths. A child who is gifted can also have other special needs such as learning difficulty, behavior disorders, physical disabilities and sensory impairment. These type of learners though gifted may perform averagely camouflaging the need for gifted services as well as the need for services due to the disability displayed. Children who are twice disabled and gifted are often referred to as paradoxical learners. Gifted and talented children who have learning disabilities exhibit characteristics such as distractibility, inattentiveness, inefficient learning and also display giftedness. Neal and Schanzenbach (2007) suggested that the children should be assisted by employing skilled manpower, use of instructions that captures their needs, providing individualized special education support and counseling.

This therefore propels the researcher to investigate the psychosocial challenges and counseling remedies available for learners with superior abilities in the inclusive settings of Njoro Sub County.

2.7 Challenges Experienced by the Physically Impaired

Some teachers according to Uttam (2005) view the children with physical impairment as troublesome due to their inability to manipulate school environment. Most schools have rough, muddy, narrow and impassible roads which inhibit children's free movement. Pupils' clumsy movement cause risky accessibility to toilets, classes and conference halls. Some of the children have coordination problems characterized by tenseness and jerkiness which is reflected in poor hand writing. The mentioned challenges cause stress, frustrations and lowers individuals' self esteem. The learners lack user friendly environment with facilities such as wide doors/aisles, low wash basins, toilets and low handles for those using wheel chairs (Hiuhu, 2008).

Turnball and Schulz (1979) assert that pupils with health problems have low blood clotting ability especially those with hemophilia or bleeders disease. They suffer emotional stress due to frequent falls and absenteeism caused by regular clinic attendance. Buttler (1987) postulated that the children suffer frustrations, become passive learners due to high demands imposed on them by their parents and teachers. Physical disability cause restricted opportunities through incidental learning for performing physical and mental skills.

The pupils have poor interpersonal relationship and hence become easily irritated, frustrated, withdrawn, pathetic and lethargic. They have challenges in drawing straight lines. The amputees suffer discomfort and financial loss due to them having to visit prosthesis specialist for routine adjustments and fittings of the devices. This contribute to them being poorly socialized (Andolo, 2006).

Report by MOEST (2006), indicated that the amputees have difficulties in manipulating both reading and writing materials. When in the inclusive setting, learners with imputed limbs have difficulties in walking, holding study materials if upper limbs are missing, inability to turn pages and inability to feed and dress themselves. A physically impaired child with cerebral palsy has difficulty in using toilets, walking to school and even dressing.

Learners with hydrocephalus (big head) due to fluid in the head experience low intelligence as compared to average learners, have poor motor activities, communication difficulties, poor visual perception and may be absent from school on routine basis since they have to go to hospital for medical checkups. These make the learners to develop self pity and hence live in isolation (Mwaura & Wanyere, 2007). Further observations by these two scholars displayed mobility problems, slowness in accomplishing academic tasks, frequent absenteeism from school due to medical appointments and checkups, weakness in fine and gross motor muscles as some of the challenges facing learners with poliomyelitis.

2.8 Challenges Experienced by the Emotionally and Behavioral Disordered Children

According to Ndurumo (1993), impulsive learners are unable to organize cognitive tasks. They have a general pervasive mood of depression, restless in class, harm themselves and others, have temper tantrums, are destructive when using books, pens, and other school equipment. The children are therefore hated by their peers and some teachers. The children have a tendency to develop physical symptoms, pain or fear associated with personal or school problems. The learners have learning disabilities which cannot be explained by sensory, intellectual or health factors. The hypocrites are restless, inactive, easily distracted and fail to accomplish task promptly. They have difficulty in waiting for ones turn in games and other group's activities (Smith & Tom, 2001). These children do not respond to simple measures of love, comfort and assurance. The emotional disordered children are anxious, timid, withdrawn and hate social activities. The pupils are in turn rejected, isolated and dehumanized. The learners are assisted by organizing the curriculum, arranging and individualizing instructions which is not common in Njoro Sub County.

Due to their unusual behavior, Gallford (1971) described the learners as passive individuals who are unable to express themselves well. They are prone to accidents and regress to their earlier form of behavior. The emotional and behavioral disordered children should therefore be guided and counseled on how to refrain from bad actions. The researcher suggested that the children should be assisted in solving specific problems, making decisions, coping with crisis and working through their inner conflicts. They should be taught how to get insight of the origin of their behavior and be guided on how to overcome them through peer counseling.

2.9 Challenges Faced by Learners Living Under Difficult Circumstances.

Child labor is a pervasive pattern in most parts of the world. The African Network asserts that child labor especially in the Agrarian rural and labor intensive communities bite as deep as poverty. Kenyan children go through difficult issues in the course of their learning which include: being orphaned, bedwetting, health problems, poverty, heading families, being abused and neglected, coming from single parents, being bullied and living with peers or parents who abuse drugs (Wangui & Mbithi, 2007). Studies by Birichi and Rukungu (2009) noted that children living under difficult circumstances go through different forms of abuse. The most common forms of child abuse include: psychological maltreatment, physical abuse, child abuse, child prostitution, child marriages, forceful separation from parents, displacement due to wars or ethnic conflicts and illegal confinement. Mostly, psychological maltreatment of learners is carried out by adults through threats, bullying and use of vulgar language. This knowledge therefore creates a gap between this group of learners and their peers who do not face similar abuse. Hence not all learners living under difficult circumstances in Kenya have been assisted. Pupils who lack parental stimulation lag behind in class, are poorly socialized, withdrawn, lonely, head families and finally become school drop outs.

Some of the children's parents are preoccupied with survival needs instead of concentrating on their children's education (Uttam, 2005). Children that take care of their aging and ailing parents suffer insecurity, trauma and emotional stress. They have short concentration span, attend afternoon lessons without lunch resulting to mental agony and emotional stress. Children from war torn zones suffer acute fear, trauma, economic crisis, physical and psychological torture with little or no medical care. The Children perform poorly in schools due to lack of skilled personnel. The disadvantaged adolescents suffer sexual abuse, inability to organize and manage time (Kirk, Gallagher & Waruguru, 2003).

Dondo (2007) postulated that children with special needs experience psychosocial challenges which require prompt attention. These psychosocial challenges include depression, grief manifested through anger, apathy, compulsive behaviors, crying, laziness, fear, fatigue, lack of sleep, isolation and feeling guilty as a result of failed responsibilities. The affected individuals are unable to access social amenities, make decisions promptly, have memory

loss and are not motivated easily. Some lack concern for personal, mental and emotional well being. Further, Dondo (2007) observed that some children show sense of doom, are sorrowful, and display severe weight gain or fluctuation. Moreover, the same report indicated that pupils with special needs experience sexual dysfunction and are totally withdrawn. This is due to lack of exposure to proper diet, segregation from peers and adults who can counsel them accordingly.

Kimani (2003) asserted that Albino children undergo involuntary jerky eye movement (*Nystagmas*) which make them perform poorly in class. He further postulated that the children are photophobic and hence cannot perform practical subjects during sunny days. This therefore exposes them to isolation, self pity and rejection. According to Buttler (1987), the learners develop low self esteem and get bored easily due to poor concentration in class. Most children live with sick siblings, relatives or experience health problems themselves. This causes enormous social, emotional and psychological implications for the client especially when one is diagnosed to go through terminal diseases such as cancer and HIV/ AIDS. Learners in this category go through unfortunate experiences such as anxiety, anger, shame, fear, depression, loneliness and a desire to withdraw from social interaction (Pratt, 2003). The scholar noted that children affected by HIV/ AIDS are often subjected to discrimination and rejection by friends and community members. This therefore shows that the children are in dire need of counseling services.

Counselors handling learners with special needs should employ coping strategies such as encouraging the learners to solve problems, participation in decision making about their issues, care and self worth (Adler, 2001). The scholar observed that counseling remains an integral part of managing HIV patients in spite of the significant medical interventions for clients. Children living with relatives, parents or siblings who are sick should be given palliative care. This enables the learners to cope during the patients' illness, treatment, support and bereavement (WHO, 2010). This study therefore seeks to come up with effective counseling strategies for learners living under difficult circumstances in Njoro Sub County in order to avert the psychosocial challenges facing them.

2.10 The Prevalence of Learners with Special Needs

Hallahan and Kauffman (1982) attested that there are several factors which make it difficult to determine the accurate prevalence of learners with special needs. These include problems involving diagnosis, definitions, sampling errors, the school roles and stigma. The two authors observed that the estimated prevalence of challenged learners is done by considering conditions of handicaps and is calculated in percentages as displayed in this study. According to MOEST (2007) survey, there are one million four hundred and twenty five learners with hearing impairments in the world. This is equivalent to twenty six point six percent (26.6%) of disabled persons. The visually impaired children rates eighteen point seven percent (18.7%) where one million and three thousand individuals were observed. The mentally challenged were observed as being (698) six hundred and ninety eight individuals with (13%) thirteen percent. Ninety point eight percent (90.8%) of the individuals under study were identified as individuals with orthopedic deformities. These cases were four million eight hundred and seventy four thousands persons. Lastly of the individuals with health challenges, two million six hundred and ninety six individuals were observed. This forms fifty point two percent (50.2%).

Further, report by MOEST (2005) gave statistical data of learners with special needs in both Primary and Secondary schools by gender. The findings indicated boys with visual impairment, hearing impairment, physical challenges, mental challenges and other types of impairment as being 74,242. Girls with similar type of impairments amounted to 87,584. The total population of both boys and girls in the schools was 161,826. This study therefore seeks to establish the total number of learners with special needs in Njoro Sub County Primary Schools by gender so as to identify the psychosocial challenges affecting them in order to come up with the necessary counseling remedies.

2.11 Counseling Intervention Strategies for learners with Special needs

Observation by Wamochu (2003) indicated that persons with disabilities need guidance and counseling which must be broadly planned and organized to cater for the varied learners' needs. Through appropriate counseling, pupils are helped to understand and accept themselves resulting to the society following human rights, integration, inclusion and practicing anti-discrimination measures. The researcher asserted that the Kenya Government's commitment in providing guidance and counseling services to learners with special needs, especially those in Primary schools to be minimal. The study noted that there is limited time for counseling learners due to heavy workload on the part of the children and teachers. The scholar therefore suggested that learners with special needs should be allowed time to visit trained counselors during games time and during non examinable subjects such as arts and craft so as to exploit their endowed potentials.

Other recommendations by the same study included: availing counseling services that will help the challenged pupils re-examine themselves in judging themselves and others. The learners should also be helped in developing and improving awareness of their feelings and promoting their ability to express their feelings in a spontaneous manner. Finally, the counseling is tailored towards empowering disabled children in developing confidence and positive regards for themselves in relationship to their abilities.

Report by NESSP (2013 – 2017) document verified that the Kenya government has not been able to meet the guidance and counseling needs of persons with special needs in the inclusive settings especially those in Primary schools. This is simply because there is limited guidance and counseling coordination of both human and material resources for assisting learners with special needs. Further still, the study shows that there is need to develop an implementing policy for instance on the use of ICT to support special needs and disability among all pupils. It is against this background that the researcher opted to conduct the research with the aim of improving the individuals' education, aspirations and interest in the inclusive settings in Njoro Sub County Primary schools through guidance and counseling sessions. The guidance and counseling is geared towards addressing learners' psychosocial and counseling needs. Teachers in return will address the social educational and vocational needs of the impaired learners.

Nwoye (1988) postulated that counselors dealing with persons with disabilities should have the spirit of dedication and professional knowledge. He further pointed out the need to involve parents, classmates, friends and other family members of this group of learners in guidance for successful counseling. The need to integrate the effort of a multi-disciplinary team of qualified professionals from the psychology and medical personnel was observed. This would include individuals such as teacher aids, special education teachers and rehabilitation counselors.

In order for the learners living in difficult circumstances to benefit in the inclusive settings, the teacher counselors should assist them in adjusting themselves to the school environment, class achievements and general school curriculum. The educators should provide consolation for children affected by home environment and conflicts which may disturb their concentration in class. Teachers and parents should support the pupils by being non authoritative (Dondo, 2007).

Mbithi, Wangui and Mwangi (2007) attested that the guidance and counseling programmes in inclusive settings should be built on a firm structure where proper adaptations of the physical facilities, time and financial budgetary are done. The scholars highlighted the fact that school teacher counselors are appointed on the basis of whether they are saved, liked by school administration or whether they look motherly or fatherly. The counseling programmes mounted by these teachers do not: gain support and approval by all school members, develop distinctive front and do not compose counseling committees nor meet the learners' special needs. The subjectively selected counselors do counseling without a schedule because they do not know the right procedures to follow and therefore end up failing. The guidance and counseling teachers do not have records or regular monitoring and evaluation procedures. The study further noted that the programmes do not enlist parents' support in the counseling services. Most pupils do not trust teacher counselors and therefore do not share their personal problems. They look at them as spies of the administration and parents. The same study asserted that colleagues perceive the teacher counselor as: part of the administration, see counseling as a waste of time, a person who coddle and pamper learners through dialogue instead of punishing them. Some teachers view counseling as a show off game. The scholars observed that the school administration view teacher counselors as an arm of the

administration who ought to be reporting indiscipline cases to them for disciplinary actions. Some parents also view the teacher counselor as one criticizing their parenting style. They feel spied on their family issues. This therefore makes counseling in primary school to be very weak. In order to improve on the counseling programmes in schools, there is need to include special counseling rooms in inclusive primary schools for all learners so as to set them free from interference where counselees can be counseled without internal or external disturbances (Wamochu, 2003).

2.12 Theoretical Framework

This study was guided by the Maslow theory of Hierarchy of needs. According to Maslow (1970), a need is a psychological or physiological difference which compels a person to satisfy it. If these needs are unmet, an individual's attitudes and behaviors are influenced negatively. Maslow's theory is guided by Deficit Principle and Progression Principle. In Deficit principle, an unsatisfied need no longer motivates behavior because people act to satisfy deprived needs. In Progression principle, the five needs identified by Maslow exist in a hierarchy, which means that a need at any level comes into play after a lower-level need has been satisfied. These guiding principles inform the study in a meaningful manner since learners with special needs have intrinsic and extrinsic needs which require satisfaction as discussed in this research.

Maslows' study revealed that people start life at the lowest level of motivational hierarchy (biological needs). After the basic needs have been satisfied, the individual look for safety needs to secure control over the environment. Afterwards, the persons move to the third level where more complex psychosocial motives become more important calling for family and community involvement, relationships and satisfaction. As the learners cleave for their social affiliation with others, they get motivated by esteem needs to achieve, become competent and recognized. This results to self actualization. At this stage the individuals are open to new challenges, experiences and engaging in activities that commensurate with the persons' highest potential (Ettinger et al, 1994)

In this study, psychosocial challenges and need for counseling interventions came into play due to the learners' special needs not having been met at certain points. These fundamental needs include desire for food, water and maintenance of the pupils' internal state of the body. If learners under study are operating at this level, and the needs are not met fully they end up panicking, getting terrified and fail to perform their class tasks and other activities as expected.

Further still, if safety needs, esteem needs and self-actualization are not met; the learners develop psychosocial issues which call for counseling interventions. Parents and members of the community should assist learners with special needs to develop positive self concept in

order for them to achieve their life goals. Children who have negative self concept believe and internalize negative attitudes of other people and their learning environment leading to them performing poorly in class. When safety needs are not met, the children feel insecure, uncomfortable and rejected. This retards the learners' efforts and slows down every form of personal development resulting to self pity and withdrawal.

Esteem needs will be met when members of the community do not become hostile to learners with special needs. The learners require recognition, approval, respect and appreciation failure to which leads to dismal performance in various fields. The performance will however be boosted through counseling which will help in eliminating the aforementioned challenges.

Lack of self actualization may result in learners developing aggressive behavior and personality insecurity. The children may also develop impulsive thinking and holding to low self concept which may make the learners not to exploit their potential fully. Maslow's theory therefore fits this study because it shows each level of need and its control measures which is necessary in curbing the learners' psychosocial challenges and counseling needs.

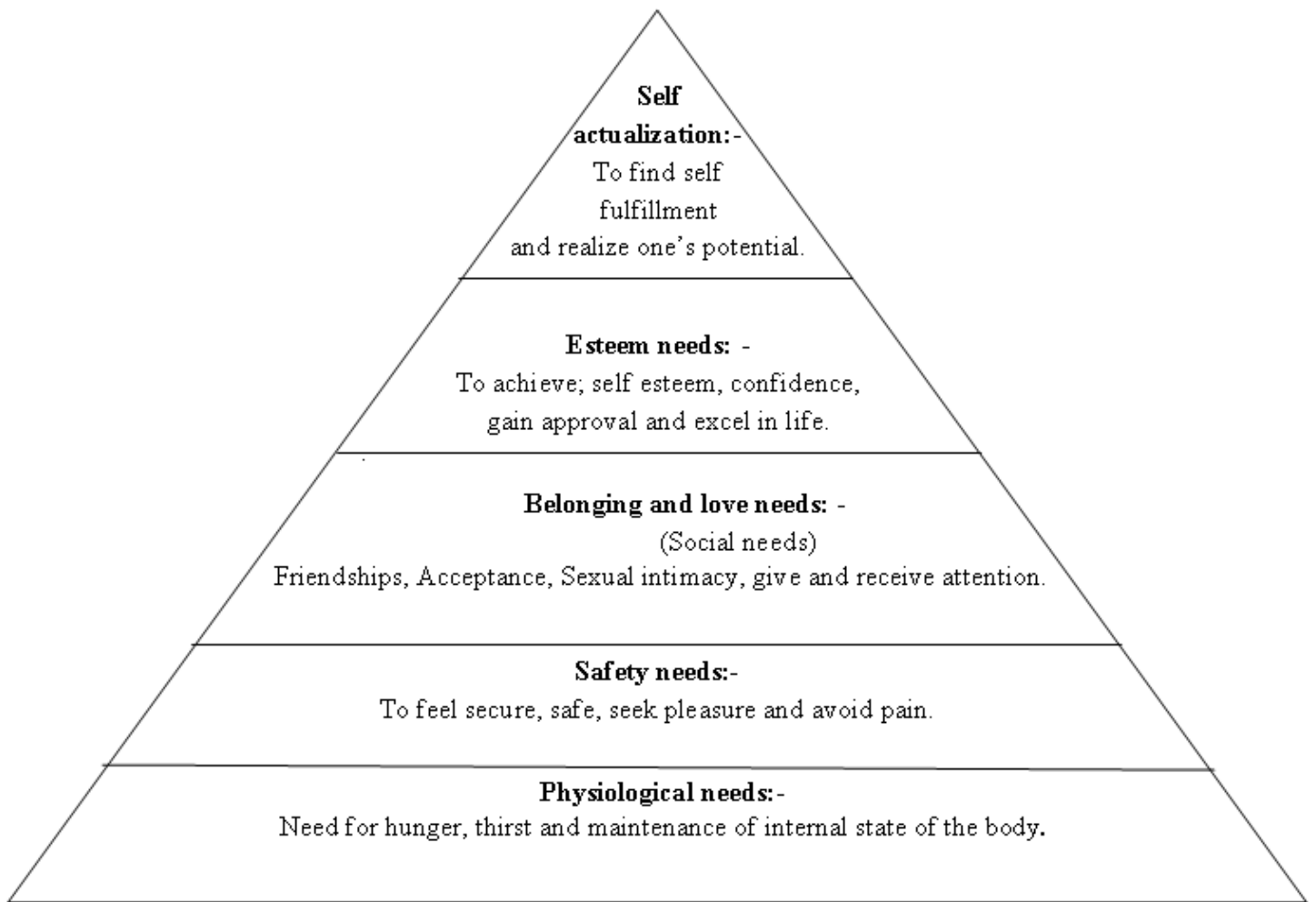


Figure 1: Maslow's hierarchy of needs model.

Source: Ettinger et al. (1994)

In addition to the theoretical framework, the relationship of the variables in this study will be discussed within the conceptual framework context.

2.13 Conceptual Framework

In this study, psychosocial challenges are the independent variables while counseling interventions are the dependent variables. The dependent variables were however measured by studying the means and frequency. The intervening variables were held constant. The relationship between independent variables, intervening variables and dependent variables is illustrated vividly by figure 2.

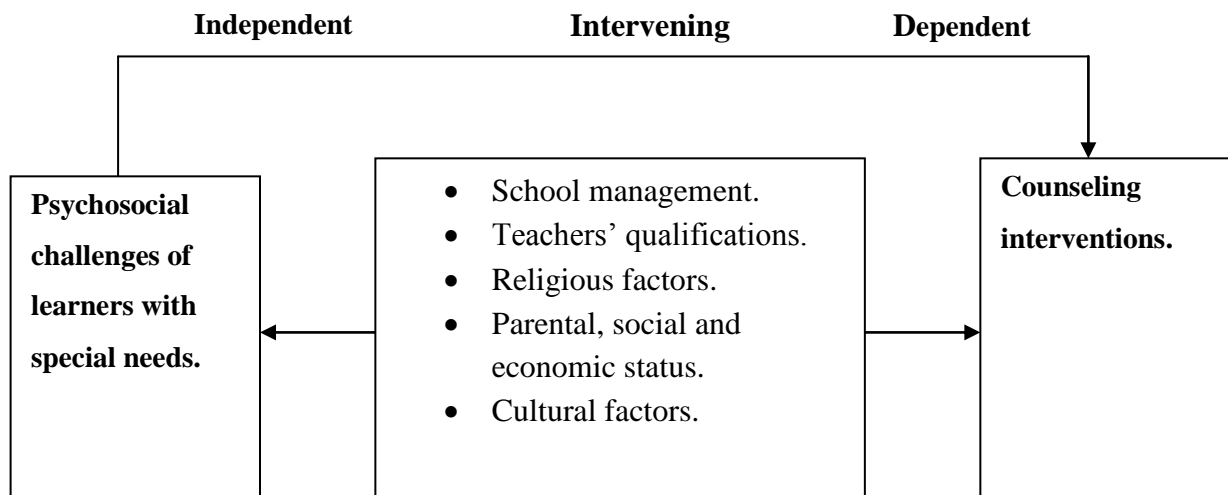


Figure 2: Influence of Psychosocial Challenges on Counseling Interventions for Learners with Special needs in inclusive Primary Schools

Figure 2 indicates that when learners with special needs manipulate the inclusive settings, psychosocial challenges manifest themselves resulting in behavior change which calls for counseling interventions. Independent variables are the psychosocial challenges while the dependent variables are the counseling interventions. These psychosocial challenges may manifest themselves in the form of rejection, withdrawal and self devaluation. The intervening variables are the teachers' qualifications, religious factors, school management, parental influence, social and economic status. The intervening variables act on the independent variables enhancing their effects on the dependent variables. For instance school managers may use derogatory remarks on learners with special needs. This may result to the learners performing poorly in class negating for professional counseling.

CHAPTER THREE

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1 Introduction

This chapter presents a description of research design, location of the study, population of the study, sampling procedure and sample size, research instrumentation, validity and reliability of research instruments, data collection procedures and methods of data analysis.

3.2 Research Design

The study utilized descriptive survey design. This design is appropriate for this study because it is designed to obtain precise information about the status of phenomena and its ability to deal with occurring events which the researcher reached out for. Descriptive surveys are also recommended in obtaining information that describes existing phenomena asking people about their opinions, prescriptions, attitudes, behaviors and values (Mugendi and Mugenda, 1999). Besides this, the design is economical when collecting data from large samples (Kothari, 2004). This design is relevant for this study because it involved collecting data from individuals who provided answers for the research questions. The design was also suitable for the study because the variables were not manipulated by the researcher. Data collection was derived from interview conducted among education officers and questionnaires filled by teachers and pupils.

3.3 Location of the Study

The research sample was drawn from both private and public Primary Schools situated within Njoro Division of Njoro Sub County, Kenya. The schools enrolled learners with diverse types of special needs. Njoro Sub County is one of the most recent created Sub Counties (2013) in Kenya with, four Divisions namely Njoro, Mauche, Lare, and Mau Narok. The Sub County is a cosmopolitan area with Egerton University and flower farms offering people from the forty two tribes of Kenya. This therefore facilitated an overview of the prevalence and variety of challenges experienced by the disabled learners in the inclusive settings as the learners stem from different social economic status. Further still, familiarity of the research location by the researcher made data collection process efficient and faster. One Private and two Public Primary Schools were used in the study since they provided adequate learners' representation

for the study. For ethical consideration, the Private School was referred to as School A while the other two Public Schools were named School B and C respectively.

3.4 Population of the Study

The target population in this study was made of 51,775 people from Njoro Sub County. The accessible population consisted of 10,250 people with 10 Education Officers, 10,200 Primary School children with special needs and 40 regular teachers. The education officers included the Sub County education officer, Sub County staffing officer, quality assurance officers, early childhood education officers and the human relationship officer. The learners were drawn from Njoro Sub County primary schools which have one Special School, 28 Private Schools and 85 Public Schools with a total population of 51,725 pupils (Njoro Sub County Education Office, 2013).

3.5 Sampling Procedure

This study employed stratified and random sampling techniques in obtaining the learners with diverse needs. Stratified technique entailed classifying the population into a number of strata and each stratum sampled independently. The children were further stratified into boys and girls before random sampling was used to achieve the desired representation from the various subgroups. Stratified sampling technique was appropriate because the schools had different categories of learners with special needs. Simple random sampling was used to give all learners equal chances of participation. Purposive sampling technique was used in selecting teachers, education officers and the schools in the study. This method assisted the researcher's judgment in selecting individuals who best met the purpose of the study.

3.5.1 Sample Size

This included a sample size of five Education Officers and 100 pupils with special needs selected from class six to eight by 20 class teachers using examination results. The results were suitable in identifying learners with cognitive difficulties and those who may have been affected by health and environmental factors. This resulted to a total of 125 respondents where pupils and teachers were given questionnaires while the Njoro Sub County Education Officers gave responses to the questions asked as the researcher conducted interviews among

them. This population is suitable because the cases are informative and possess the required traits (Mugenda & Mugenda, 1999). Fraenkel and Wallen (2000) asserted that the minimum sample sizes for research should be 100 cases. Thus this study met this qualification since it was able to meet a sample of 125 individuals.

3.6 Instrumentation

The researcher made use of questionnaires and interview schedule when collecting data in order to give the respondents chance to express themselves freely. The first section consisted of demographic information which was filled by all respondents while the second section was based on types of learners with special needs whose recipients were teachers. The third section was based on psychosocial challenges which were filled by pupils themselves. The questionnaire facilitated consistency of certain data across informants (Borg & Gall, 1983). The questionnaires assisted the researcher to have an insight of the challenges experienced by learners themselves and the agony the teachers go through in the process of teaching and learning. Questionnaires have been chosen because they are user friendly for literate people and are suitable for collecting data from large population (Mugenda & Mugenda, 1999). Five Education officers from Njoro Sub County were interviewed. These instruments gave factual information concerning learners with special needs.

3.6.1 Validity of the Research Instrument

The researcher developed the instruments in line with the objectives of the study. Validity refers to the ability of an instrument to measure what is scheduled to measure accurately. The research instruments were validated by the researcher's supervisor and other research experts in the Department of Psychology, Counseling and Educational Foundations. This ensured that validity of the analyzed data matched the phenomenon under study.

The research instrument was piloted in Ogilgei Primary School in Rongai Sub County where six teachers and 30 pupils having comparable characteristics with the actual study were involved. Pilot study helped in eliminating ambiguity. To ensure validity of the study, the researcher visited the pilot school, sought permission from relevant authorities and created rapport with pupils with special needs and their teachers. This ensured easy carrying out of the research.

3.6.2 Reliability of the Research Instrument

According to Orodho (2004), reliability of measurement is the degree to which a particular measuring procedure gives similar results over a number of repeated trials. To ascertain reliability of questionnaire, piloting was done in Ogilgei Primary School. In order to determine the reliability of the instruments, Cronbach's Alpha method was employed where a reliability coefficient of 0.702 was established. This implied that there was consistency among the items measuring the concepts of interest. To ensure reliability of the instruments, the researcher sought expert advice from the supervisor and other research experts in the department of Psychology, Counseling and Educational Foundations. The experts carefully reviewed the process used in developing the instruments in order to ensure that the tools served the intended purpose.

3.7 Data Collection Procedure

The researcher got introduction letters to conduct the research from the University's Department of Psychology, Counseling and Educational Foundations, Graduate School, Njoro Sub County Education Office and a research permit from the National Commission for Science, Technology and Innovations (NACOSTI). This was followed by booking of appointments with head teachers of the targeted schools. On the agreed dates, the researcher visited the intended respondents and collected data using questionnaires and conducted interviews. Class teachers assisted the researcher in data collection by use of previous examination results which showed the learners' academic performance. To ensure reliability, the researcher requested the respondents to give independent and honest responses to the questions asked within the stipulated time. The researcher got a response rate of 98% because he administered the research tools personally, motivated the respondents by creating a good rapport, clarified concepts and explained the purpose and significance of the study.

3.8 Data Analysis

The collected data was analyzed using descriptive statistics with the aid of Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) version 17.0 for windows. This was done following the objectives and questions of the study. Basically means, percentages and frequencies were used to present the findings of the study. The quantitative response of the questionnaires and the qualitative response of the interview schedule from the respondents were coded, tabulated,

their frequency taken and then analyzed. Qualitative data was obtained through interview conducted among Education officers in Njoro Sub County who gave their responses in a narrative manner. This enabled them to give their intimate views, opinions, feelings and thoughts. Finally, the questionnaires and interview schedules were assembled, numbered for easy retrieval and data analysis. Analysis of qualitative data was done by identifying the key substantive points and putting them into exhaustive and exclusive categories.

CHAPTER FOUR

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

4.1 Introduction

This chapter presents the results and discussions of the study on the Psychosocial Challenges and Counseling Interventions for Learners with Special Needs in selected inclusive Primary Schools in Njoro Sub County of Nakuru County, Kenya. The data collected from respondents was analyzed using Computer Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) for windows version 17.0. The study was guided by the three research objectives which were to:

- i) Establish types of special needs found in learners in the inclusive Primary Schools of Njoro Sub County.
- ii) Determine the psychosocial challenges faced by learners with special needs in inclusive Primary Schools of Njoro Sub County.
- iii) To establish the counseling interventions accorded to learners with special needs in inclusive Schools of Njoro Sub County.

The findings of the study are presented in the following sections:

- i) Demographic characteristics of the respondents that participated in the study.
- ii) The types of special needs found in learners in the inclusive Primary Schools of Njoro Sub County.
- iii) The influence of psychosocial challenges on learners with special needs in inclusive Primary Schools of Njoro Sub County.
- iv) The counseling interventions accorded to learners with special needs with the aim of addressing the psychosocial challenges affecting the individuals.

4.2 Demographic characteristics of learners with special needs, teachers and Education Officers in Njoro Sub County.

The sample of investigation consisted of three groups namely; teachers, learners with special needs and education officers. This section presents the different types of learners with special needs in Primary Schools, the psychosocial challenges and counseling interventions for learners with special needs. This section also presents demographic characteristics that were examined in the study which are distribution by gender, education of the teachers, education officers and the learners' mode of socialization.

The bar graph in figure 3 shows the distribution of learners and teachers who participated in the study by gender.

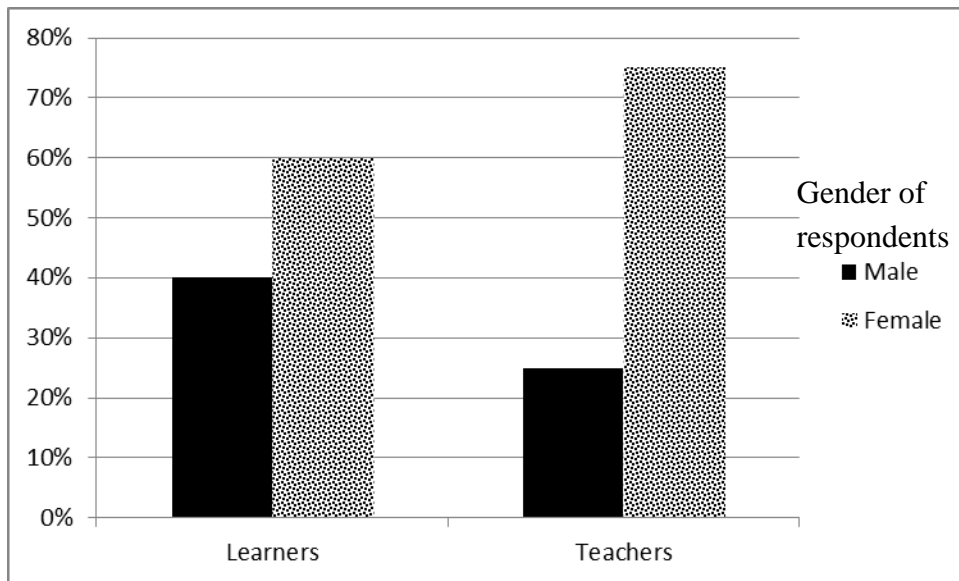


Figure 3: Distribution of learners with Special Needs and teachers by Gender

The results from Figure 3, shows that the respondents were in the ratio of 2:3 and 1:3 in terms of gender that is to say that, there were 40 (40%) boys, 60 (60%) girls and 5 (25%) male teachers and 15 (75%) female teachers. These included learners with special needs and regular class teachers. This means that each gender of respondent was given its own representation in the study.

4.2.1 The distribution of Njoro Education Officers by academic qualifications.

The study interviewed five Education Officers from Njoro Sub County. Out of the five officers, interviewed, four were males while only one of them was a female.

Table 1: Distribution of Education Officers in Njoro Sub County by academic qualification

Level of Education	Frequency (f)	Percentage (%)
P1 Certificate	1	20
Degree	1	20
Master's Degree	3	60
Total	5	100.0

The results from Table 1 show the education level of Njoro Sub County Education Officers. The table indicated that majority of respondents had a masters degree (60%). According to the results those who had attained P1 Certificate and University Degree each constituted (20%). The results indicated that only one education officer had a master’s degree in special needs education while the other officers did not know how to handle learners with special needs. This therefore shows that the officers cannot offer specialized assessment, evaluation and supervision of this type of learners.

4.2.2 Distribution of the different types of Learners with special needs in the Inclusive Primary Schools of Njoro Sub County.

This part presents a discussion of findings given by teachers, children with special needs and education officers concerning the different types of special needs found among learners in Primary Schools.

4.2.3 Distribution of teachers who participated in the study by their education level.

Figure 4 gives an insight of the education level of the teachers who participated in the study.

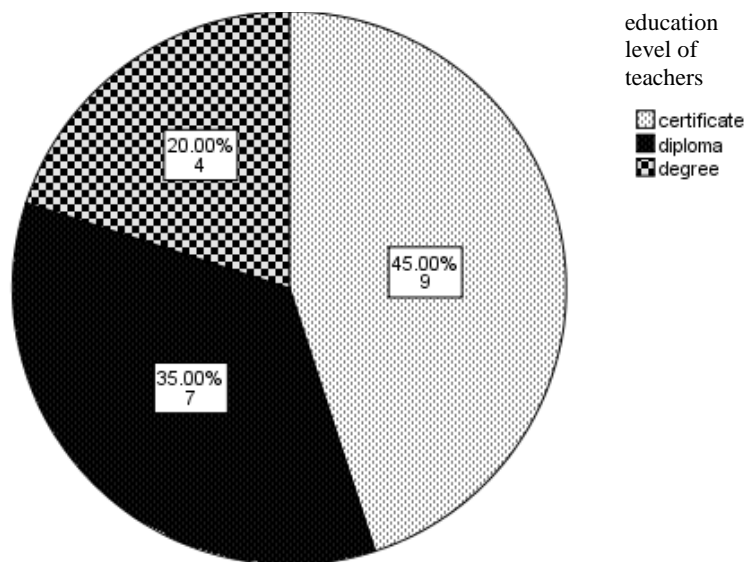


Figure 4: Education level of the respondents (teachers)

The results in Figure 4 showed that 9 (45%) of the respondents had certificate as their highest level of education, with 7 (35%) of the teachers having reached diploma level and only 4

(20%) of them having degree as their highest level of education. None of the teachers who responded to the questionnaire had a masters’ degree or professional training in counseling. These findings indicate the need for qualified personnel to be deployed in primary schools in order to assist pupils with disabilities. This is in line with Birichi and Rukungu (2010) who postulated that counselors dealing with persons with disabilities should have professional knowledge and the spirit of dedication so that they can be in a position of dealing with the pupils’ psychological, emotional and social problems. The only big issue as observed in this study is that none of the teachers approached had counseling knowledge in assisting pupils with special needs in the inclusive settings.

4.3 The types of special needs found in Learners in inclusive Primary Schools of Njoro Sub County.

Objective one of the study was to establish types of special needs found in learners in the inclusive Primary Schools in Njoro Sub County. When the class teachers were asked whether their school had learners with diverse special needs, the response was as shown in Table 2.

Table 2: Teachers’ responses concerning learners with diverse special needs

Teachers Responses	Frequency(f)	Percent (%)
Yes	20	100
No	0	0
Total	20	100.0

Table 2 showed that all class teachers in the area of study recognized the fact that their schools had learners with diverse special needs. This was made evident by 20 (100%) of the respondents who gave yes responses to the question ‘Does your school have learners with diverse special needs?’ This means that most schools had pupils with different types of special needs who go through unnoticed psychosocial challenges. These learners therefore require specialized teaching and counseling services (Theresia, 2004). The study therefore identifies a gap between learners with special needs and their peers calling for specialized teaching and counseling.

Figure 5 shows the different types of special needs exhibited by learners with special needs in Primary Schools as reported by their teachers.

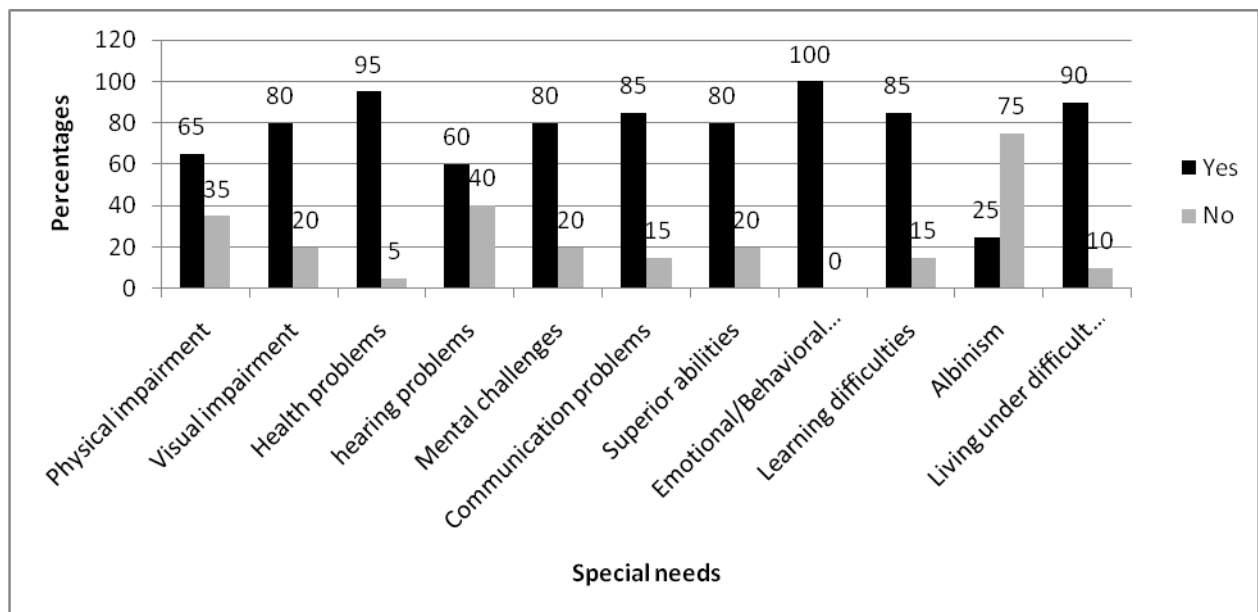


Figure 5: Special needs present in selected inclusive primary schools in Njoro Sub County.

Figure 5 shows how the teachers responded when they were asked whether certain special needs are common among learners in their schools. ‘Yes’ meant that there were learners with the indicated special needs in their schools while ‘No’ meant otherwise. From the figure, it can be seen that 100% of the teachers indicated that they had learners with emotional and behavioral disorders. This is the highest percentage which is followed by learners with health problems as 19 (95%) of the respondents indicated that they had learners with this problem. 17 (85%) of the respondents had learners with learning difficulties that is those with problems in handling a given subject, and they also had learners living under difficult circumstances such as orphans, living with foster parents or those acting as heads of their families. 16 (80%) of the respondents had learners with visual impairment. The same percentage of teachers had learners with mental challenges and superior abilities. 17 (85%) of the respondents had learners with communication problems. Those teachers who reported to have had learners with physical impairment in their school rated 13 (65%). 12 (60%) of the respondents had hearing problems common among learners in their schools. Only 5 (25 %) of the respondents had learners with albinism. According to Wangui and Mbithi (2007), Kenyan children go through difficult issues in the course of their learning which include: bedwetting, poverty,

being orphaned, heading families, being abused and neglected, having sickness, and coming from single parents. The results indicate the need for specialized trained personnel to prepare learners on how to face the challenges they go through while learning.

Table 3 presents the prevalence and percentages of each type of special needs found among learners in Schools as reported by their teachers.

Table 3: Distribution of the various special needs in selected inclusive primary schools

Learners with special needs	No.	Sum	Mean	Percent
How many children in your school have physical impairment?	20	26	1.30	5%
How many children in your school have visual impairment?	20	224	11.20	4%
How many children in your school have health problems?	20	213	10.65	4%
How many children in your school have hearing problems?	20	114	5.70	2%
How many children in your school have mental challenges?	19	425	22.37	8%
How many children in your school have communication problems?	19	612	32.21	11%
How many children in your school have superior abilities?	19	320	16.84	6%
How many children in your school have emotional and behavioral disorders?	19	327	17.21	6%
How many children in your school have problems in handling mathematics?	18	2046	113.67	38%
How many children in your school have albinism?	20	5	.25	0.09%
How many children in your school live under difficult circumstances?	19	1101	57.95	20%
Valid N (list wise)	18			100.0%

From the findings in Table 3, it can be concluded that 5% of the learners in schools had physical impairment while an equal percentage that is 4% represented learners with visual impairment and those with health problems. The same results showed that 2% of the respondents had hearing problems. 8% of the respondents indicated that they had mental challenges while 11% of the learners had communication problems. Respondents with

superior abilities in addition to those with emotional and behavioral disorders rated 6% respectively. Learners with problems in handling Mathematics registered the highest percentage (38%) while those with albinism were 0.09%. The findings finally revealed that 20% of the children live under difficult circumstances and require counseling services. These findings therefore reveal that there is need for counseling and professional handling of these learners since the pupils go through unnoticed psychosocial challenges. The results agrees with the findings of Mbithi, Wangui & Mwangi (2007) who attested that guidance and counseling programs in each inclusive settings should be built on a affirm structure where proper adaptation of the physical structures, time and financial budgetary are done.

When learners with special needs were given questionnaires to fill concerning the types of special needs affecting them, they gave their results as detailed in Figure 6.

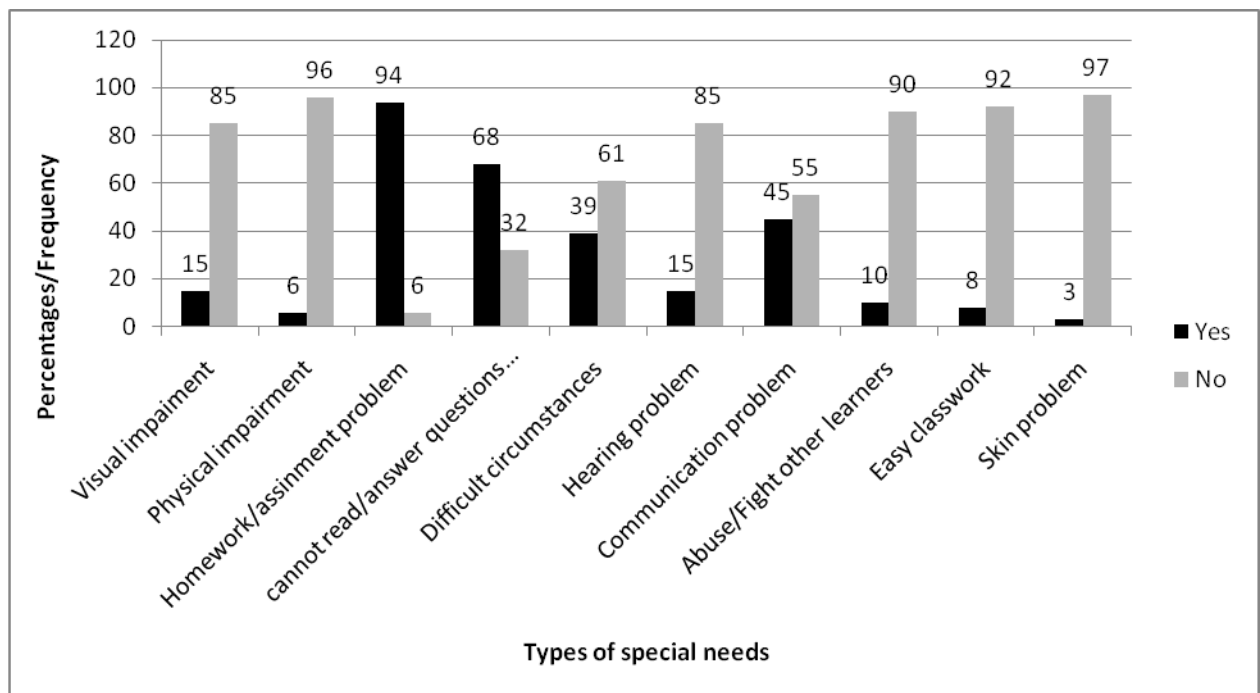


Figure 6: Types of special needs affecting learners in inclusive Primary Schools in Njoro Sub County.

Figure 6 shows types of special needs that affect learners in selected inclusive primary schools in Njoro Sub County. The learners were responding to a question which asked them whether they were affected by the aforementioned types of special needs. Those who gave ‘yes’ as a response were taken to be affected by the special need. Response ‘No’ indicated

that the learner was not affected by the special need. The figure shows that the highest percentage of learners (94%) had difficulties in finishing their homework in time. This is followed by those who could not read or answer questions correctly with 68 percent of learners affected in this line. Those who had communication problems stand at 45%. 39 (39%) of the learners lived under difficult circumstances for instance those who were living with sick relative(s)/parent(s), single parent or no parents. 15% of the learners had visual impairment, 15 % had hearing problems, and 10% felt good when fighting or abusing other children (learners with emotional and behavioral disorders). 6% of the learners had physical impairment with only 8 (8 %) of the learners finding classwork very easy and therefore wanted more work. This percentage could have represented the gifted and talented learners. Only 3 (3%) of the learners had skin problem (Albinism). May be this type of learners were hidden in homes due to parents' stereotype attitudes. The findings of this study agree with those of Mwaura (2001) that in inclusive primary schools, there are learners with diverse special needs which include those with: specific learning difficulties, speech or language difficulties, mental retardation, serious emotional disturbances, auditory impairments, those living under difficult circumstances, orthopedic impairments, health impairments, visual impairments and traumatic brain injury. These findings indicate that teacher counselors should not be subjectively appointed; instead their selection should be based on qualifications.

4.3.1 Results presented by Njoro Sub County Education Officers on prevalence of disabled learners.

When the respondents were asked whether they knew who learners with special needs were, they gave a range of responses. For instance there were officers who said that learners with special needs are exceptional learners ranging from gifted to challenged learners. Others had a view that these were learners whose performance was below average or pupils who had physical deficiencies or those who were orphans. Another officer indicated that these were learners who may not benefit from regular classroom instructions due to their unique social, emotional, physical and mental characteristics. The results given therefore shows that majority of the Education officers were not trained in handling learners with special needs or assessing them or inspecting their learning institutions.

The findings of this report agreed with the Kenya Government, (1999) report of the Commission of Inquiry into the education system of Kenya. Totally integrated quality of Education and training which asserts that the Kenya curriculum has rigid assessment procedures which do not meet pupils' needs in the inclusive schools. Lack of awareness campaigns by the County Assessment and the Resource personnel through seminars to the field Officers, teachers and other stake holders could also have been attributed to the Education Officers' ignorance (Ngugi, 2003). Ignorance of the Education Officers was demonstrated by their inability to identify learners with special needs in addition to their subjective selection for supervision of teachers teaching these children.

When the officers were asked about the number (prevalence) of children with special needs in Njoro Sub County, it was evident that there was no documentation (no data) on the numbers of such children. One officer was not sure about the numbers of learners with special needs while four officers indicated that there was no data kept concerning the same children. Even though there was no documentation, the officers agreed with the fact that the numbers of children with special needs in the Sub County were on the rise. The study's results are in line with those of Horwarth (1987) which verified that lack of such data is due to the Education officers lacking knowledge concerning the special population world.

In their own opinion, the Education officers indicated that the special needs common among learners in Njoro Sub County inclusive primary schools are: mental impairment (slow learners), communication disorders, emotional and behavioral disorders, specific learning difficulties, visual impairment and physical impairment. This is a clear indication that the Sub County schools have learners with diverse special needs.

4.4 The psychosocial challenges faced by disabled Learners while in Schools.

Objective two of the study was to determine the psychosocial challenges faced by learners with special needs in inclusive Primary Schools of Njoro Sub County. Results of this study verified that most learners in schools faced psychosocial challenges which impact negatively on their studies and their daily activities as reported by learners themselves, their teachers and education officers. Table 4 shows the response of the teachers when they were asked whether they were trained to handle learners with special needs.

Table 4: The percentage of teachers trained to handle Learners with Special Needs

Responses	Frequency(f)	Percent (%)
Yes	6	30.0
No	14	70.0
Total	20	100.0

Table 4 shows that out of the 20 class teachers contacted, only 6 (30%) had been trained to handle learners with special needs in seminars and at certificate level. A bigger percentage (70%) of the teachers had not been trained to handle learners with special needs. This result confirms the Kenya Government (1999) report of the Commission of Inquiry into the education system of Kenya. Totally integrated quality of education and training which observed that there is inadequate trained personnel who use rigid teaching approaches which do not capture the needs of learners with disability in the Kenyan inclusive primary schools. Hence, the pupils' special needs that cause psychosocial challenges and counseling intervention strategies in Njoro Sub County Primary schools were unmet and therefore called for urgent attention.

Table 5: Teachers' responses on learners' participation in class activities

Responses	Frequency(f)	Percent (%)
Active learners	2	10
Passive learners	17	85
Total	19	95

Table 5 shows that most of the learners 17(85%) are passive learners. Only 2 (10%) of the respondents indicated that pupils with special needs are active learners. This is a clear indication that this group of learners had intrinsic issues that required immediate interventions so that the individuals can benefit in the teaching and learning process. This study identifies a gap in teaching methodology which should include guidance and counseling. Relaxation exercises, talking therapy, physical activities, writing, drawing and

games should be included in the child’s daily activities to provide outlets of tensions and emotions enhancing good rapport between the teacher and pupils (Birichi & Rukungu, 2009). The researcher also sought the opinion of the teachers on whether there were major, minor or no adjustments that should be done on the curriculum for handling learners with special needs and the responses are as indicated in Table 6.

Table 6: Adjustment of curriculum for handling impaired learners according to teachers.

Curriculum amendments.	Frequency(f)	Percent (%)
None	1	5
Major	18	90
Minor	1	5
Total	20	100.0

Results as indicated in Table 6 indicated that 18 (90%) of the teachers asserted that the curriculum used in handling learners with special needs require major adjustments to include the various needs of the learners. 1 (5%) of the teachers’ results noted that the curriculum needed minor adjustments with only 1 (5%) thinking that the curriculum required no adjustments. The two aforementioned results concur with the Kenya Government, (1999) report of the Commission of Inquiry into the Education system of Kenya. Totally integrated quality of Education and training which saw the need for the Kenyan Government to adjust the curriculum so that it can favor all learners with special concerns. In depth findings from the teachers indicated that they used different methods to assist learners with special needs.

4.4.1 Responses of learners with special needs concerning their concentration while in class.

When the respondents were asked if they had anything that made them not to concentrate in class, the responses were as shown in Figure 7. These discussion details most of the causes of psychosocial challenges to learners with special needs.

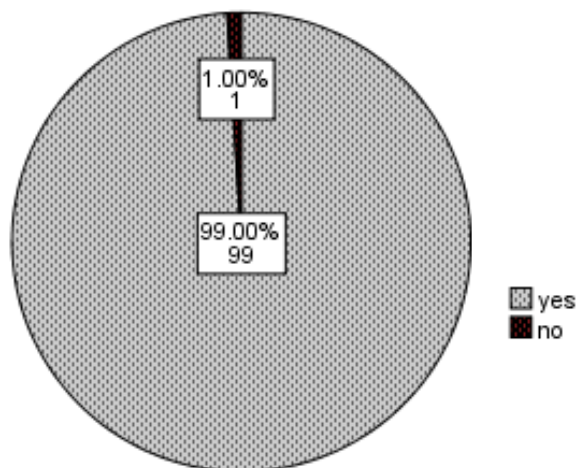


Figure 7: Deterrent to concentration of learners with special needs.

Figure 7 shows that almost all of the learners involved in the research 99 (99%) had at least something that made them not to concentrate in class with only 1 (1%) of the respondents responding otherwise. These results shows that inclusive learning should be adopted in all regular schools in order to provide psychological services which promote acceptance, comfort, empathy and unconditional positive regard to learners with special needs. However, the situation is bleak in rural areas, highly enrolled schools and urban regular schools where there are neither facilities nor trained personnel to cater for the handicapped learners (UNESCO, 1990).

The researcher also sought to find out whether there were psychosocial challenges which face learners in a teaching and learning atmosphere. Figure 8 depicts the feelings of pupils in a classroom atmosphere.

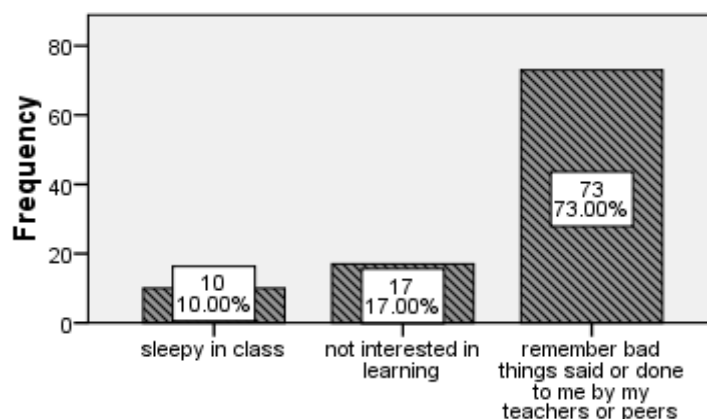


Figure 8: Feelings of the children when reading

Figure 8 indicated that 73 (73%) of the children always remembered bad things said or done to them by their teachers or peers while reading. This included the derogatory remarks made by teachers concerning the children and the corporal punishment they received for not finishing assignments in time. 17 (17%) of the children were not interested in learning with only 10 (10%) of the children usually feeling sleepy in class while reading. These findings revealed presence of psychosocial challenges such as withdrawal, rejection, self devaluation and self pity in a teaching and learning atmosphere. The findings are in tandem with the study of Dean (1996) which states that some teachers may object having learners with special needs in their schools or classes fearing that the pupils will lower their schools' mean scores. This they argue could be because of the education system which is examination oriented resulting into the learners experiencing psychosocial challenges.

Figure 9 indicated specific learning difficulty encountered by different learners as a result of the subject(s) being difficult.

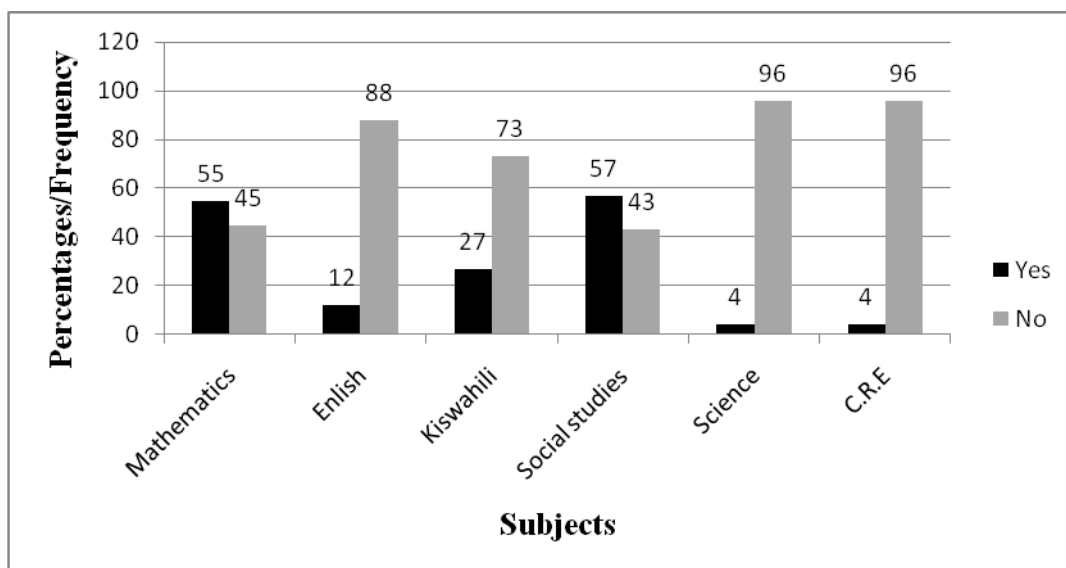


Figure 9: Most difficult subjects leading to specific learning difficulties in learners.

Figure 9 details the responses of the children when they were asked about the subjects they felt were most difficult during their course of study. The value at the tip of the bars shows the number of children while the other value shows the percentages of the respondents. The children were asked if there were any of the aforementioned subjects which appeared most difficult to them. When a child gave a yes response, then it was taken that the subject was most difficult to the child. No as a response attracted a conclusion that the subject was easy. From Figure 9, it is clear that social studies appeared most difficult subject with 57 (57%) of

the learners rating it so. Mathematics was rated by 55 (55%) of the children as the most difficult subject. Kiswahili came third with 27 (27%) of the children rating it as most difficult. The easiest subjects appeared to have been C.R.E and science with 96 (96%) of the learners rating them so. This was followed by English with 88 (88%) of the learners rating it as an easy subject. Some of the learners exhibited learning difficulties in more than one subject. This study established that there are a good number of children with specific learning difficulties as observed by Gargulo (2006). This therefore causes intrinsic psychosocial challenges to the pupils which need counseling interventions.

However, Figure 10 shows the negative effects which were brought about by the subject(s) being difficult for the learners to handle.

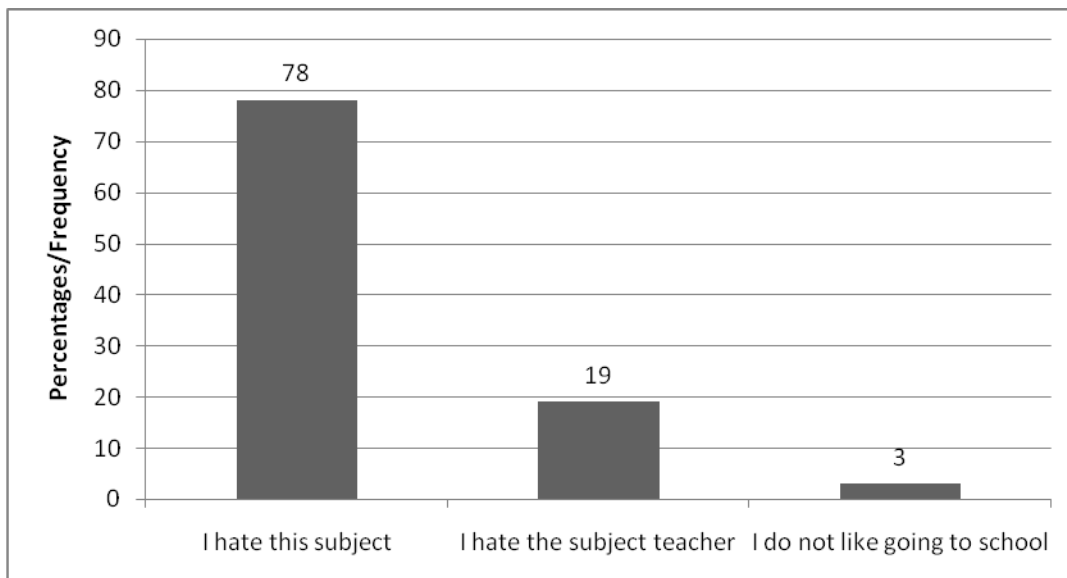


Figure 10: Effects of a subject(s) being difficult to children.

Figure10 shows why the children responded that various subjects were most difficult. A look at the figure indicates that 78 (78%) of the learners hated the subject that they felt was most difficult or probably it can be said that the subject being most difficult resulted into the learners hating the subject. 19 (19%) of the learners hated the subject teacher(s) while 3 (3%) of the learners did not like going to school. It can be concluded from the results that these children need confidants whom they can vent out their feelings to. The results proved that inclusive education should ensure that all pupils, parents and teachers gain the virtues of being accommodative, accepting, patient and cooperative for the good of learners with

disabilities. The other conditions which could have contributed to the children facing psychosocial challenges and calling for counseling interventions in the study according to Singh (2013) are the nature and type of disabilities, social emotional, health and political factors. Koech Report (1999) noted that there are insufficient trained personnel who use rigid teaching approaches which may only benefit average learners.

Further results indicated that there were other issues which caused psychosocial challenges among learners with special needs as illustrated by figure 11.

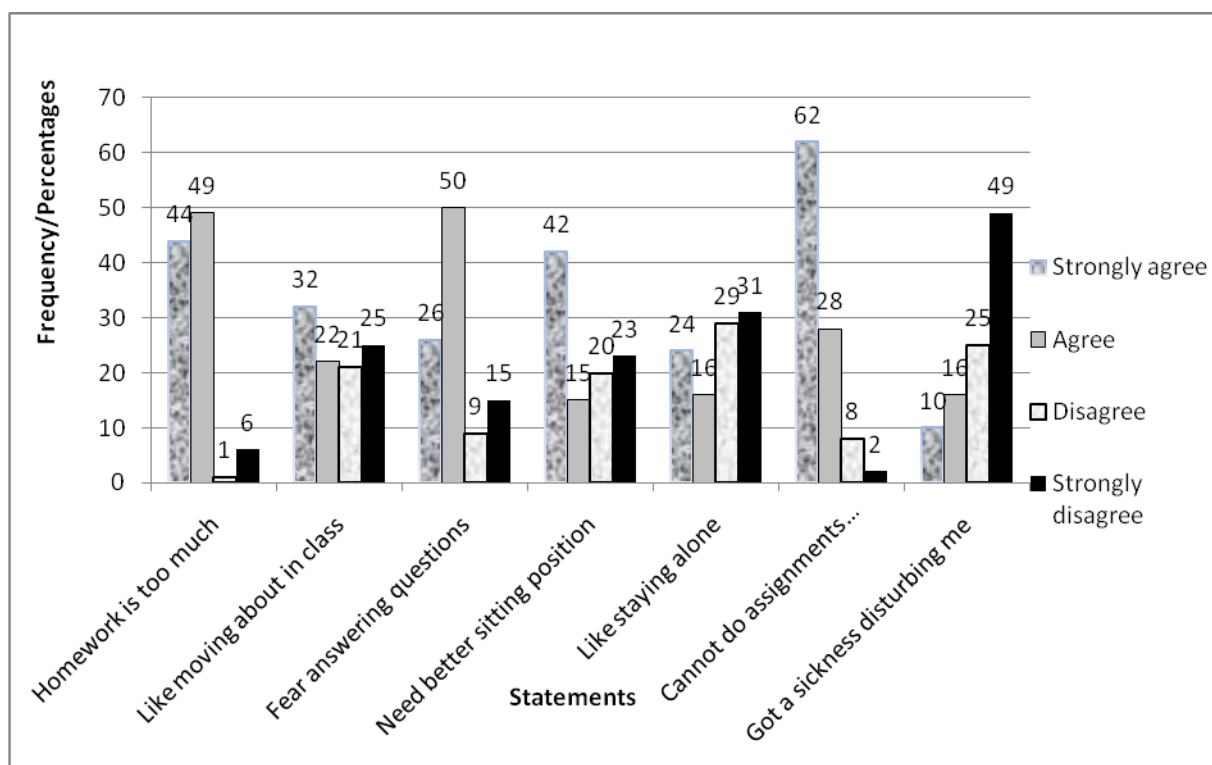


Figure 11: Special needs issues which lead to psychosocial challenges among learners in Njoro Sub County.

Figure 11 depicts special needs issues found among learners in selected inclusive primary schools in Njoro Sub County. The learners were asked whether they strongly agreed, agreed, disagreed or strongly disagreed to the statements on the x-axis. It is evident from the figure that 62% of the learners (the highest percentage) could not do assignments alone and therefore needed their friends to help them. 44 % of the learners strongly agreed to the fact that the homework given to them was too much and therefore needed to be reduced. 49% also

agreed to this fact. The findings can therefore conclude that a bigger percentage of the learners felt that the homework given to them by their teachers was too much and therefore needed reduction. The results that 32% of the learners strongly agreed that they liked moving about in class while 22% just agreed that they liked moving about in class after finishing their homework. 26% of the learners strongly agreed that they feared answering questions in class with 50 % agreeing that they feared answering questions in class. 42% of the learners strongly agreed that they needed a better sitting position in class with 15% agreeing with this statement. 24% of the learners liked staying alone doing their own things. 16% also agreed with this statement. 10% of the learners had a sickness which disturbs them. This probably implied that the sickness which disturbed them was a serious one and they were sure about the nature and form of the sickness. Those who agreed that they had a sickness which disturbs them were 16%. The sickness and the aforementioned stressors caused psychosocial challenges such as isolation, self pity and self devaluation to learners with special needs calling for counseling interventions. These findings confirms the Kenya Government, (1999) report of the Commission of Inquiry into the needs of learners with special needs in that it lacks clear policy guidelines and legal status on special needs provision.

4.5 Counseling Interventions offered to learners with special needs in Njoro Sub County.

Objective three of the study sought to establish the counseling interventions strategies accorded to learners with special needs in inclusive Primary schools. Individual counseling is the main form of counseling service rendered to learners with special needs in the Sub County's primary schools as indicated by the officers. Two Education officers indicated that counseling services were not well organized in the Sub County primary schools and if in any case the services were there, then they were conducted at individual levels and by unqualified teachers. The study's results were supported by report of Waiguru (2002) who asserted that regular schools lacked adequate staffs with guidance and counseling skills to assist learners living under difficult circumstances and their teachers.

When the Education Officers were asked about the intervention measures they used to avert the psychosocial challenges faced by learners with special needs in primary schools, two of the respondents were of the opinion that the education officers in the Sub County had done

very little or nothing at all since such cases were not brought to them. There was also an indication by three officers that they encouraged schools to strengthen guidance and counseling services in their schools, ensured non-discrimination of learners with special needs in schools and therefore embarked on advocacy for learners with special needs. The officers were also empowering guidance and counseling committees to discourage social stigma among learners, teachers and community members.

When asked about the effectiveness of the intervention strategies mentioned formerly, the indication was that the strategies had generated very minimal impact. The officers were left guessing that the schools had strengthened counseling services since such cases were mostly not taken to them and the society at large was not aware of the existence of learners with special needs in the Sub County. This therefore proves Alper (1995) assertion that Administrators handling inclusive schools should be productive, self motivated and good decision makers. The study further noted that the field officers should organize in service training that addresses learners' needs, allow problem solving approaches, peer counseling and allow collaborative learning in schools.

From the interview, it was established that the Teachers' Service Commission (T.S.C.) does not employ professional teacher-counselors in respect to the psychosocial challenges affecting learners with special needs in Primary Schools in Njoro Sub County and if in any case the professional teacher-counselors were there, they were ill prepared and were very few compared to the rising numbers of learners with special needs in the Sub County. The T.S.C. did not have the objective of employing teachers specifically trained to undertake professional counseling in primary schools.

It was also very clear from the interview that there was only one Education officer in Njoro Sub County trained in handling learners with special needs. However, the trained officer was fully involved in early childhood education (E.C.D.E.) activities and not handling learners with special needs. This is an indication that there is a serious shortage of trained officers in this delicate area. There should therefore be proper staffing of such trained officers to cover every school that have learners with special needs. According to Guralnick (1990) an inclusive setting which the Ministry of Education ought to develop should generate and

safeguard inclusive education in terms of financial allocation, staff development, assessment and placement opportunities.

The responses given by the Education Officers proved that teachers who were trained to handle learners with special needs and were posted in inclusive Primary Schools were denied special allowances by their employer and are poorly distributed. This makes them not to feel motivated and may not effectively meet the psychosocial challenges and the counseling needs of learners with special needs in Njoro Sub County. Further results showed that each Inclusive Primary School in the Sub County should have at least one specialized trained teacher. It was also mentioned that schools with such learners should notify the Sub County Staffing Officer (S.S.O.) so that arrangements can be made to employ teachers with the required training.

4.5.1 Ways of boosting morale of the specialized trained teachers.

The following were the suggestions that were given by the Education officers in the Sub County on how the teachers should have their morale boosted:-

- i) They should be given special allowances to cater for the extra work done.
- ii) They should be appreciated and recognized during Sub County Education days for their contribution in handling learners with special needs.
- iii) There should be opportunities for education and training of all teachers and other education stakeholders on special needs to improve efficiency.
- iv) Ensuring that teachers handle reasonable number of learners with special needs.

These results concurs with the United Nations Education, Scientific and Culture report (2008) that barriers to inclusive education is a major denial of educational opportunities to learners with special needs. Such barriers include funding, poor remuneration of employees, lack of innovations and inadequate special education policy. Failure to meet the motivation needs of the teachers would results to them losing their working morale which may cause further psychosocial challenges on the learners.

In the cause of the study, counseling interventions used in various Schools in assisting pupils with special needs were sought. Table 7 therefore shows percentages and frequencies of the

teachers who responded to the question that asked them which counseling strategies they used when assisting learners with special needs.

Table 7: Counseling interventions used by teachers in various schools when assisting learners with special needs

Counseling strategies	Frequency(f)	Percent (%)
Creating good rapport	4	20
Instilling confidence	8	40
None	3	15
Coping skills	1	5
Self reliance	4	20
Total	20	100.0

Instilling confidence was the most popular counseling strategy used by various schools with 8 (40%) of the respondents indicating that they used instilling confidence as a strategy to assist learners with special needs. 4 (20%) of the respondents indicated that they used creating good rapport and self reliance as counseling strategies. Some teachers 1(5%) asserted that they used coping skills as a means of counseling their learners in the process of teaching and learning. These could have been because of the teachers' inability to enlist the support of parents, school managers and the specialized professionals. This high percentage of support might have been because teachers in the current Education System are supposed to implement counseling services to all pupils in schools instead of caning them and therefore they could not criticize the very system they are part of. It is also evident that there were no counseling strategies used in certain schools as 3 (15%) of the respondents indicated that they did not use any counseling strategies in their schools. These groups of educators therefore required proper training and counseling. These results negates report by Ongama (2008) who noted that personnel charged with the lives of young children should be equipped with adequate knowledge, skills and right attitudes for helping all learners in Schools.

Figure 12 shows teachers' results on socialization of learners with special needs with their peers while in school.

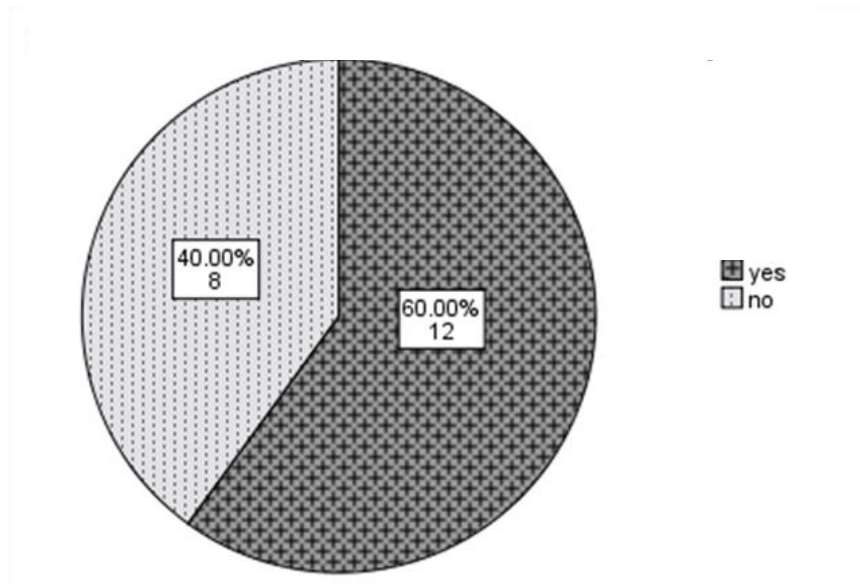


Figure 12: Socialization of Learners with Special needs while in Schools

According to figure 12, 12 (60%) of the teachers involved in this study indicated that learners with special needs socialized freely with their peers with 8 (40%) indicating otherwise. The later percentage reveals that learners with special needs suffer psychosocial challenges and counseling issues which require professionals to tackle. These results are in tandem with postulations of Ongama (2008) which observed that teachers and caregivers should encourage their peers to socialize with the pupils to avoid alienating them. The same study noted that all the work done by these children should be reviewed to understand their levels of advancement and to determine when to resort to other professional help.

Table 8: The advice given to learners with short attention span.

Advice given	Frequency(f)	Percent (%)
Study hard	11	55
Memorize their notes often	9	45
Total	20	100.0

Table 8 shows how teachers assisted learners with short attention span while in School. In most of the selected inclusive primary schools, 11 (55%) of the teachers advised learners with short attention span to study hard while 9 (45%) of the teachers advised such learners to memorize their notes often. According to Gargiulo (2006) this disorder may include

individuals with perceptual impairments, brain damage and developmental appraisal. The results hence indicate that teachers require professional training in the counseling field as a big percentage indicated that they advised learners with special needs to study hard. This is mainly because studying hard would not avert a special need condition like mental impairment.

Table 9: Frequency of counseling sessions in various inclusive schools as reported by teachers

Counseling Sessions	Frequency (f)	Percent (%)
Often	7	35
Always	1	5
As a teacher wishes	12	60
Total	20	100.0

Table 9 revealed that counseling sessions in the selected inclusive schools were done as a teacher wished. This conclusion was reached at based on the highest number of teachers 12 (60%) who indicated so. This implies that the school administrations do not facilitate decisions made for guidance and counseling activities in most schools. 7 (35%) of the respondents indicated that counseling sessions were done in their schools often. Only 1 (5%) of the teachers indicated that counseling sessions in their schools were always conducted. The findings of this study have an implication that there was no time set aside for counseling the pupils in the said schools. Probably the best approaches to do this could have been by fusing of counseling services by the teachers in the process of teaching their usual lessons. Teaching cannot follow a fixed curriculum and methods, innovations must be put in place (Oliver& Williams, 2005).

This pie chart shows how teachers assisted learners with special needs in their classes.

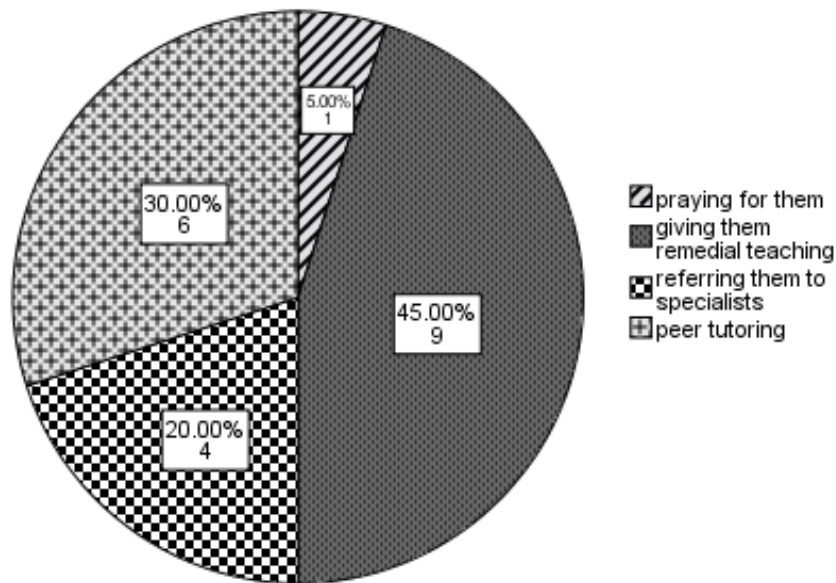


Figure 13: The assistance rendered to learners with special needs by their teachers while in class.

The study showed that most of the teachers 9 (45%) assisted learners with special needs in their classes by giving them remedial teaching while 6 (30%) of the teachers indicated that they assisted such learners through peer tutoring. 6 (30%) of the respondents asserted that they referred learners with special needs to specialists for in-depth interventions. Only 1 (5%) of the teachers helped such learners by praying for them. Apart from the 5% assistance given to learners, the other help rendered showed that the learners benefited while in inclusive schools. This is in line with Westwood (1997) who postulated that inclusive schooling creates the best possible opportunity for children with disabilities to observe and imitate interactions and behavior of others.

The study presented results on counseling strategies used by teachers in assisting children with special needs as indicated by Figure 14.

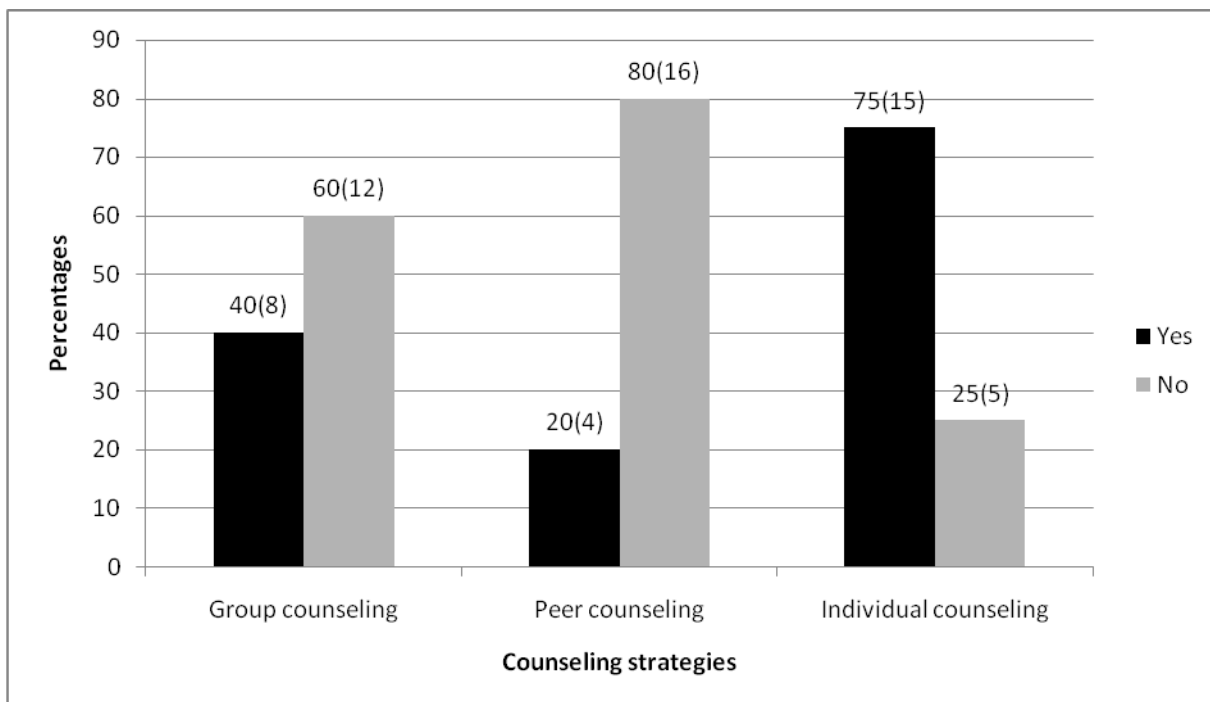


Figure 14: Counseling methods used in various inclusive primary schools

Figure 14 indicated that individual counseling was very popular in various selected inclusive schools since 15 (75%) of the visited class teachers indicated that they used this method of counseling in their schools. This kind of counseling creates a gap in service provision since it is very helpful to clients whose learning capacity has been affected by their state of mind rather than problems caused by external factors. Group counseling followed with popularity since 8 (40%) of the respondents indicated that they used this method of counseling in their schools. Peer counseling was not very popular in the selected schools since only 4 (20%) of the respondents indicated that they used this method of counseling in their schools. These results reveal the fact that some teachers had slight knowledge concerning counseling strategies. The findings of this study agree with Birichi and Rukungu (2010) studies which pointed out the need to involve all teachers and other stake holders in the guidance and counseling of learners with special needs.

Table 10 shows how the teachers responded to the question that asked them how they assisted hyperactive learners in their schools.

Table 10: Ways of assisting hyperactive learners

Statement	Frequency (f)	Percent(f)
Individual counseling	19	95
Informing their parents	1	5
Total	20	100.0

It can be seen from table 10, that 19 (95%) of the teachers assisted hyperactive learners in their schools through individual counseling while only 1 (5%) did so by informing their parents. The 95% response verified that individual counseling provides the children with a situation of complete confidentiality. It also gives opportunity for trusting and closer relationships between the counselor and the counselees (Theresia, 2004). The 5 % response by teachers implies that there is a gap in counseling knowledge and therefore inform parents so that they can consult specialists when need arises. This shows that there is need for holding seminars in schools with the aim of equipping teachers with counseling skills.

When the teachers were asked how they assisted learners with partial vision and therefore cannot read small prints, their responses were as indicated in table 11.

Table 11: Methods used in assisting learners with partial vision

Methods used in assisting learners	Frequency(f)	Percent (%)
Sit where they want	4	20
Sit according to class performance	2	10
Sit near the blackboard	14	70
Total	20	100.0

Table 11 shows that 14 (70%) of the respondents indicated that they assisted learners with partial vision by making them sit near the blackboard with 4 (20%) of the teachers saying that they assisted such learners by making them sit where they wanted. Only 2 (10%) of the respondents assisted learners with partial vision by making them sit according to class

performance. This method is not suitable because it disadvantages learners with partial vision as some of them find themselves sitting at the back of the class worsening their performance. This is a clear indication that some learners in schools still go through psychosocial challenges and counseling issues without being noticed. The learners therefore require parental intervention where the parents and teachers discuss on better strategies of assisting the learners. These findings agree with the assertion of Okech and Kimani(2007) which saw the need of families of persons with disabilities to speak on behalf of their children.

CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 Introduction

This chapter summarizes the findings of the study, presents conclusions and recommendations of the study. It also gives suggestions for further research.

5.2 Summary of the Findings

Based on the analysis and subsequent interpretation of the results, the study revealed the following findings in relationship to the stated objectives. In order to describe the data obtained effectively, frequency counts and percentages were maintained.

- i) The results revealed that Inclusive Primary Schools have learners with diverse needs which require medical, counseling and educational interventions. This implies that policy makers should not shy away from their responsibility of making sure that specialized facilities, educational and material resources are accorded to all learners with special needs in Kenya schools.
- ii) The study established that learners with special needs have psychosocial challenges and therefore require attention. The study also revealed that self pity, sadness, withdrawal, despair, rejection and self devaluation were the key psychosocial challenges facing learners in Primary Schools.
- iii) It was also apparent that most of the counseling services accorded to learners with special needs were inadequate and therefore require skilled personnel, proper teaching approaches and community involvement to administer. The results of the study therefore revealed that in order to assist the learners fully, counseling services such as instilling confidence, creating good rapport, self reliance right placement and coping skills should be in cooperated in the teaching and learning process.

5.3 Conclusions

- i) From the findings of this study, it can be concluded that there are learners with diverse special needs in schools and that the Teachers' Service Commission has not employed enough teachers who are trained in handling the learners needs in all Inclusive Primary Schools.
- ii) Learners with special needs in Schools still experience psychosocial challenges because the few regular specialized trained teachers are poorly remunerated and hence not motivated to continue helping them. From the findings, it is evident that the current school curriculum is burdensome to learners with special needs and their teachers.
- iii) It can also be concluded that the counseling intervention measures used in Schools have generated very minimal impact on the learners due to lack of staff with guidance and counseling skills necessary for assisting learners with special needs. This therefore means that learners with special needs still require specialized teaching since the Teachers' Service Commission does not employ professional counselors in Primary Schools to offer counseling services to the learners.

5.4 Recommendations of the Study

Based on the study findings, the following recommendations were made:-

- i) The specialized trained Teachers should be well remunerated while the untrained teachers and Education Officers should be equipped with skills, knowledge and attitude necessary for assisting learners with different types of special needs in Schools.
- ii) The Ministry of Education, Science and Technology should consider organizing induction courses for its staff for efficient evaluation, monitoring and supervision of counseling programs in schools in order to alleviate the psychosocial challenges affecting learners with special needs.
- iii) Guidance and counseling programs in all Inclusive Schools should be built on a firm structure where proper adaptation of the physical structures, time, budgetary allocation and deployment of skilled personnel should be done.

5.4.1. Suggestions for Further Research

The researcher suggested that further research should be carried out on:-

- i) Effects of different types of special needs on learners' performance in primary Schools.
- ii) Studies of similar nature should be replicated in different Sub Counties in Kenya for comparison purposes.
- iii) Causes of psychosocial challenges that face learners with special needs in the regular Primary Schools.
- iv) Counseling intervention measures for learners living under difficult circumstances.

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APPENDICES

APPENDIX A: TEACHERS' QUESTIONNAIRE

Introduction

My name is Jesse Kimani a Masters' degree student currently undertaking M. Ed (Guidance and Counseling) course in the Department of Psychology Counseling and Educational Foundation in Egerton University. I'm carrying out a research entitled Psychosocial Challenges and Counseling Intervention for Learners with Special Needs in selected inclusive primary schools in Njoro Sub County.

Please note that any information given by you will only be used for research work. Your contributions towards this research will be highly appreciated and will be treated with outmost confidentiality. Kindly answer the following questions by either ticking or filling in the blank spaces provided.

Section A: Background of the Respondent.

	Gender of respondent:	Male. <input type="checkbox"/>	Female. <input type="checkbox"/>
	Education background.		
	Masters. <input type="checkbox"/>	Degree. <input type="checkbox"/>	
	Diploma. <input type="checkbox"/>	Certificate. <input type="checkbox"/>	
	Specify any other.....		

Section B: Types of Learners with Special Needs and the counseling interventions used.

1.	Does your school have learners with diverse special needs?		
	Yes. <input type="checkbox"/>	No. <input type="checkbox"/>	Not sure. <input type="checkbox"/>
2.	Are you trained in handling learners with special needs?		
	Yes. <input type="checkbox"/>	No. <input type="checkbox"/>	
3.	Tick the type(s) of special needs common in your school and indicate the number of children affected. Those with:		
	a) Physical impairment. <input type="checkbox"/> Total. <input type="checkbox"/>	b) Visual impairment. <input type="checkbox"/> Total. <input type="checkbox"/>	
	c) Health problems. <input type="checkbox"/> Total. <input type="checkbox"/>	d) Hearing problems. <input type="checkbox"/> Total. <input type="checkbox"/>	
	e) Mental challenges. <input type="checkbox"/> Total. <input type="checkbox"/>	f) Communication problems. <input type="checkbox"/> Total. <input type="checkbox"/>	

12.	Learners with special needs in your class are assisted through: <input type="checkbox"/> i) Praying for them. <input type="checkbox"/> ii) Giving them remedial teaching. <input type="checkbox"/> iii) Referring them to specialists. <input type="checkbox"/> iv) Peer tutoring. <input type="checkbox"/> Specify any other
13.	What type of counseling do you use in your school? i) Group counseling. <input type="checkbox"/> ii) Peer counseling. <input type="checkbox"/> iii) Individual counseling. <input type="checkbox"/> iv) None. <input type="checkbox"/>
14.	Hyperactive learners are assisted by teachers through: i) Individual counseling. <input type="checkbox"/> ii) Informing their parents. <input type="checkbox"/> Specify any other way
15.	Children with partial vision and hence cannot read small prints are assisted by making them: i) Sit where they want. <input type="checkbox"/> ii) Sit according to their class performance. <input type="checkbox"/> iii) Sit near the blackboard. <input type="checkbox"/> State any other method

THANK YOU

APPENDIX B: QUESTIONNAIRE FOR CHILDREN

Introduction

My name is Jesse Kimani a Masters’ degree student currently undertaking M. Ed (Guidance and Counseling) course in the Department of Psychology Counseling and Educational Foundation in Egerton University. I’m carrying out a research entitled Psychosocial Challenges and Counseling Intervention for Learners with Special Needs in selected inclusive primary schools in Njoro Sub County.

Please note that any information given by you will only be used for research work. Your contributions towards this research will be highly appreciated and will be treated with utmost confidentiality. Kindly answer the following questions by either ticking or filling in the blank spaces provided.

Section A: Background of the Respondent.

	Gender of respondent: Male. <input type="checkbox"/>	Female. <input type="checkbox"/>
	Level of study: Class	

Section B: Psychosocial challenges facing learners with special needs.

1.i	Do you have anything that makes you not to concentrate on your studies when in school?	Yes. <input type="checkbox"/>	No. <input type="checkbox"/>
ii	How do you usually feel when reading?		
	a) Sleepy in class.....		<input type="checkbox"/>
	b) Not interested in learning.....		<input type="checkbox"/>
	c) Remember bad things said or done to me by my teachers or peers.....		<input type="checkbox"/>
2.i	Which subject appear most difficult to you in the course of your learning?		
	Mathematics. <input type="checkbox"/>	English. <input type="checkbox"/>	Kiswahili. <input type="checkbox"/>
	Social studies. <input type="checkbox"/>	Science. <input type="checkbox"/>	C.R.E. <input type="checkbox"/>
ii	How does this affect you?		
	a) I hate this subject.....		<input type="checkbox"/>
	b) I hate the subject teacher.....		<input type="checkbox"/>

	c) I do not like going to school..... <input type="checkbox"/>				
3.	Tick the type(s) of special need that affects you.				
	i) Inability to see the black board well (visual impairment).....	<input type="checkbox"/>			
	ii) Physical impairment.....	<input type="checkbox"/>			
	iii) I am not able to finish my homework or exams in time.....	<input type="checkbox"/>			
	iv) Cannot read and answer questions correctly.....	<input type="checkbox"/>			
	v) Live with sick relative(s)/parent(s), single parent or no parents (children living under difficult circumstances).....	<input type="checkbox"/>			
	vi) Have hearing problems.....	<input type="checkbox"/>			
	vii) I am not able to speak English well.....	<input type="checkbox"/>			
	viii) Feel good when fighting or abusing other children (emotional and behavioral disorders).....	<input type="checkbox"/>			
	ix) Find class work very easy and like to be given more work (gifted and talented learners).....	<input type="checkbox"/>			
	x) Have a skin problem (albinism).....	<input type="checkbox"/>			
4.	Read the following instructions and put a tick appropriately: SA (Strongly Agree), A (Agree), D (Disagree) SD (Strongly Disagree).				
	Statement	SA	A	D	SD
	The homework given to me is too much and therefore should be reduced.				
	I like moving about in class after finishing my work.				
	I fear answering questions in class.				
	I need a better sitting position in order to study well.				
	I like staying alone doing my own things.				
	I cannot do my assignments alone and therefore need friends to help me.				
	I have sickness which disturbs me.				

THANK YOU

- (b) Comment on the effectiveness of the intervention measures given.
- 6) Please comment on the availability of professional teacher-counselors employed by the Teachers Service Commission in respect to the psychosocial challenges affecting learners with special needs in Njoro Sub County Primary Schools.
- 7) Kindly give your view on the number of Education Officers trained in handling learners with special needs in Njoro Sub County and how their staffing should be done.
- 8) a) In your own opinion, how should the teachers who are professionally trained to handle learners with special needs in Njoro Sub County Primary Schools be distributed?
- b) Suggest how the teachers should be motivated.

THANK YOU

APPENDIX D: RESEARCH PERMIT



NATIONAL COMMISSION FOR SCIENCE, TECHNOLOGY AND INNOVATION

Telephone: +254-20-2213471,
2241349, 310571, 2219420
Fax: +254-20-318245, 318249
Email: secretary@nacosti.go.ke
Website: www.nacosti.go.ke
When replying please quote

9th Floor, Utalii House
Uhuru Highway
P.O. Box 30623-00100
NAIROBI-KENYA

Ref. No.

Date:

19th February, 2014

NACOSTI/P/14/2888/720

Jesse Waweru Kimani
Egerton University
P.O.Box 536-20115
EGERTON.

RE: RESEARCH AUTHORIZATION

Following your application for authority to carry out research on *“Influence of psychosocial challenges on counseling interventions for learners with special needs in selected inclusive primary schools in Njoro District of Nakuru County, Kenya,”* I am pleased to inform you that you have been authorized to undertake research in **Nakuru County** for a period ending **20th March, 2014.**

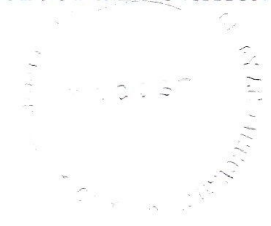
You are advised to report to **the County Commissioner and the County Director of Education, Nakuru County** before embarking on the research project.

On completion of the research, you are expected to submit **two hard copies and one soft copy in pdf** of the research report/thesis to our office.

DR. M. K. RUGUTT, PhD, HSC.
DEPUTY COMMISSION SECRETARY
NATIONAL COMMISSION FOR SCIENCE, TECHNOLOGY & INNOVATION

Copy to:

The County Commissioner
The County Director of Education
Nakuru County.



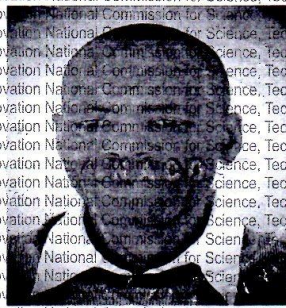
National Commission for Science, Technology and Innovation is ISO 9001: 2008 Certified

Permit No. : **NACOSTI/P/14/2888/720**
Date Of Issue: 19th February, 2014
Fee Received :Ksh 1000.00

THIS IS TO CERTIFY THAT
MR JESSE WAWERU KIMANI
of EGERTON UNIVERSITY, 318-20100
Njoro, has been permitted to conduct
research in Nakuru County
on the topic: INFLUENCE OF
PSYCHOSOCIAL CHALLENGES ON
COUNSELING INTERVENTIONS FOR
LEARNERS WITH SPECIAL NEEDS IN
SELECTED INCLUSIVE PRIMARY
SCHOOLS IN NJORO DISTRICT OF
NAKURU COUNTY KENYA
for the period ending
20th March 2014

Jesse Waweru Kimani
Applicant's Signature

[Signature]
NACOSTI Secretary
National Commission for Science, Technology & Innovation



CONDITIONS

- 1. You must report to the County Commissioner and the County Education Officer of the area before embarking on your research. Failure to do that may lead to the cancellation of your permit.**
- 2. Government Officers will not be interviewed without prior appointment.**
- 3. No questionnaire will be used unless it has been approved.**
- 4. Excavation, filming and collection of biological specimens are subject to further permission from the relevant Government Ministries.**
- 5. You are required to submit at least two (2) hard copies and one (1) soft copy of your final report.**
- 6. The Government of Kenya reserves the right to modify the conditions of this permit including its cancellation without notice.**

RESEARCH CLEARANCE PERMIT

Serial No: 1001
CONDITIONS: see back page