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

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A Research Project Submitted to the Graduate School in Partial Fulfilment of the Requirements for the Award of Master of Education Degree in Guidance and Counseling of Egerton University

EGERTON UNIVERSITY

MARCH, 2015
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:       ……………………

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EM16/2565/10

Recommendation

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

Signature………………………………………….       Date:       ……………………

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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.
ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

My heartfelt gratitude goes to the Almighty God for giving me the ability to pursue this Master’s Degree Course. Other gratitude goes to the 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 Method Alpha. 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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