



ISSN: 0975-833X

RESEARCH ARTICLE

CHALLENGES/DIFFICULTIES FACED BY THE LEARNERS WITH EMOTIONAL AND BEHAVIOURAL DIFFICULTIES (EBD) IN ACCESSING THE REGULAR CURRICULUM IN INCLUSIVE PRIMARY SCHOOLS, SIAYA COUNT, KENYA

^{*},¹Herine Akumu Ouma Mboya, ²Dr. Benson Charles Odongo and ³Dr. Charles Makori Omoke

¹Master student in the School of Education, Department of Special Needs and Early Childhood Education, Jaramogi Oginga Odinga University of Science and Technology Kenya

²Lecturer in the School of Education, Department of Special Needs and Early Childhood Education, Jaramogi Oginga Odinga University of Science and Technology Kenya

³Lecturer in the School of Education, Department of Special Education, Jaramogi Oginga Odinga, University of Science and Technology Kenya

ARTICLE INFO

Article History:

Received 23rd January, 2016
Received in revised form
15th February, 2016
Accepted 27th March, 2016
Published online 26th April, 2016

Key words:

Impulsivity, Attention Deficit and
Hyperactivity Disorders (ADHD)
lack of trained personnel.

ABSTRACT

Educating learners with Emotional and Behavioural Difficulties presents both challenges and prospects. Despite sensitization, training and capacity building to teachers on Special Needs Education in general and on Emotional and Behavioural Difficulties, this special group of learners still face educational challenges in inclusive schools due to their deviant behaviours thus jeopardizing their learning. The purpose of his study was to examine the challenges and prospects in educating learners with EBD in inclusive schools, Madiany division, Siaya County Kenya. The objective of the study was to examine the challenges the EBD learners face in accessing the general curriculum in inclusive schools. The study was informed by B. F. Skinner's behavioural theory of reinforcement and adopted concurrent triangulation and descriptive survey designs. It targeted 570 teachers where 102 teachers were sampled using simple random sampling and cluster sampling and 15 head teachers were sampled using purposive sampling. The study used questionnaires to collect data from teacher and interview schedules to collect data from the head teachers. Qualitative data was analyzed thematically while quantitative data was analyzed using descriptive statistics including frequency counts, measures of central tendencies and percentages. The findings of the study were presented in tables and narratives. The study found out that truancy, impulsivity, Attention Deficit and Hyperactivity Disorders (ADHD) lack of trained personnel, large class sizes and the system of education in Kenya are among the challenges that were faced by the EBD learners. It also found out that teachers have mixed attitude towards the EBD learners. The study recommended that there should be constant capacity building to teachers on special needs education and that the Teachers' Service commission should employ at least one trained special needs education teacher in every school for quality and professional management of the EBD learners.

Copyright © 2016, Herine Akumu Ouma Mboya et al. This is an open access article distributed under the Creative Commons Attribution License, which permits unrestricted use, distribution, and reproduction in any medium, provided the original work is properly cited.

Citation: Herine Akumu Ouma Mboya et al. 2016. "Challenges/difficulties faced by the learners with emotional and behavioural difficulties (ebd) in accessing the regular curriculum in inclusive primary schools, Siaya count, Kenya", *International Journal of Current Research*, 8, (04), 30013-30017.

INTRODUCTION

Emotional and Behavioural Disorders (EBD) is one of the categories of disability included under individuals with disabilities. Some students with emotional and behaviour problems are in general education classroom where they typically cause serious and legitimate concern for their teachers and often for their classroom peers and school administrators as well.

**Corresponding author: Herine Akumu Ouma Mboya,*
Master student in the School of Education, Department of Special Needs and Early Childhood Education, Jaramogi Oginga Odinga University of Science and Technology Kenya.

Due to inclusion, learners with Emotional and Behavioural Difficulties are found in inclusive schools and considering their emotional maladjustment and behaviour disorders, they were bound to encounter challenges some of which jeopardize their learning (Kauffman and Landrum 2006). In the 17th and 18th century, people viewed EBD children as a nuisance, those who were to be seen and not heard, sweet and humorous, and those who could only be involved anyway. Spiritualists and moralists however viewed such children as special creatures from God whose behaviour needed to be guided and corrected. In the 19th century, it was still believed that EBD was caused by demons, therefore EBD children were viewed as wicked, evil and possessed by evil spirits (Pastor, Reuben and Duvan, 2012).

Kauffman and Landrum (2009) add that the negative assumptions led to horrible treatment of such children including excessive punishment, imprisonment, and placement in poor houses, beatings, chaining and other cruel actions in most developing countries. Furthermore, teaching and working with students with EBD often raised anxiety in teachers more than any issue in education. Placement of students with EBD has been a matter of special concern and controversy in the context of the movement towards full inclusion; the idea that all students should be placed in general education classes in their neighbourhood schools regardless of their disabilities. A research done by Mark (2001) at Montana University-Bozeman indicated that teachers were faced with the demand of large class sizes, less home support and substantial problems thus posing challenges of general curriculum to pupils with Emotional and Behavioural Disorders (Kauffman and Landrum 2006).

In Jordan, students with disabilities are still being educated in separate classrooms and in separate schools. A few attempts have been made to integrate children with disabilities in regular classrooms. Because of the importance of integrating persons with disabilities in regular classrooms, it is necessary to investigate the attitude of educators and administrators towards this practice and towards the person with disability in general in Jordan (Al Khateeb, 1996; Hadidi, 1998). In India, research has shown positive social and academic results for children with disabilities in heterogeneous groups and for the teacher responsible for such a heterogeneous group and support. Inclusion of young children in early childhood education can be a formal method for screening, diagnosis, determining eligibility of special service and planning instruction of placement. Assessment also can be a means for monitoring the process and informal determination of any help that an individual child may need in the classroom. Teacher education is of paramount importance if inclusion is intended to be achieved by any system of education. The role of teachers is given great importance for the effective handling of the inclusive classroom. Development and use of appropriate classroom practices, resources and assessment is considered critical for the success of any classroom, it becomes more challenging considering the diverse needs of the learners in an inclusive classroom (Bailey and Woley, 1992).

In Botswana, depending on the disability, special educators can use various techniques in order to promote learning in an inclusive setting. Individualized instruction, problem-solving assignments, and small group work are some of the teaching methods that special educators may apply given the magnitude of the disability. Special educators, among other roles, help in the development of an Individualized Education Programme (IEP) for each special needs learner including those with EBD. This individualized Education Programme consists of sets of individualized goals for each learner and is usually tailored to the specific needs and capability of the learner (Loreman and Deppeler, 2006). Kenya has exerted tremendous efforts to address the challenges confronting students with individual needs but a great deal remains to be accomplished. It is fortunate that through technology, Kenyans are becoming more aware of what is happening in other parts of the world. As a result, parents and advocates of individual needs are lobbying

the government to do more for those with special needs. Kenya is committed to achieving education for all citizens, a commitment that is yet to be translated into real result for the learners with EBD (MoEST, 2004). After independence, the government saw the need of starting non formal education to meet diversities in learners to free students from being locked into one curriculum over other flexible ones. The Kamunge report of (1988) recommended that learners with EBD should be identified early enough for appropriate intervention measures. Furthermore, guidance and counselling programmes were to be established in schools for them. In 1963, through enactment of public law 88-164 and the public law 94-142 of 1975, there was formal inclusion of such learners in public education for the first time (Buhere, Ndiku and Kindiki, 2014). In Kenya, individuals with disabilities are a crucial sector of the marginalized population. An exact number of individuals with disability are not available (Ndurumo, 2001). The Ministry of Education Science and Technology (MoEST 2004) provided an estimated prevalence rate of 10% and noted the fact that there are approximately 750,000 students with disabilities in elementary levels some of whom had been identified, assessed and enrolled in schools. However, the government has provided minimal funding despite the overwhelming needs (Oriedo, 2003)

The curriculum in Kenya is such that all children have to go through a particular programme regardless of their special needs. For instance a child in primary school has to take 8 years before sitting for a national exam. This is sometimes unbearable for the EBD learners who may not be able to remain in schools for long due to their behaviour problems like truancy, Attention Deficit and Hyperactivity Disorders (ADHD) and short concentration span among others. This also implies that the EBD learners do not have a flexible system of education whereby they are allowed to take exams when it is convenient for them. The learners therefore conditionally stress themselves with rigid rules and regulations which are difficult to follow considering their behaviour disorders. Lack of unified educational programmes for learners with EBD is yet another challenge facing them in accessing curriculum. Whereas some EBD learners are found in regular schools, others are found in informal schools, while others are found in Borstal institutions and rehabilitation centres. These entire institutions offer different curriculum thus lack of uniformity (Wambua, 2008).

Keta and Wambua (2007) on the other hand assert that in Kenya, children and youths with EBD often face challenges in learning institutions due to their characteristics. Some of these challenges include; dropping out, finding themselves in trouble with law enforcers, neglect, being contained in schools through inappropriate behaviour management strategies, transfers and insult or abuse from teachers. Such children are equally subjected to a rigid curriculum system (8-4-4), which often reduces completion rates depending on their nature. In Rarieda Sub County, learners with EBD are available in inclusive primary schools and they face challenges related to behaviour management. This is according to a research carried out by a Non Governmental Organization called African Network for Protection and Prevention of Child Abuse and Neglect (ANPPCAN) in Rarieda Sub County schools whose major purpose was to find out the methods used to discipline learners

in inclusive schools and further sensitize teachers on alternative positive discipline. ANPPCAN eventually trained all the head teachers in Rarieda schools on Alternative Positive Discipline (APD) and expected the head teachers to do the same to their teachers as a way of reducing corporal punishment especially among the deviant learners who are also EBD in nature. The NGO in collaboration with the Teachers' Service Commission eventually provided a guide to all inclusive primary schools on Alternative Positive Discipline (APA).

Purpose and Objective

The purpose and objective of this study was to examine the challenges/difficulties faced by learners with Emotional and Behavioural Difficulties (E.B.D) in accessing the regular curriculum.

Research Design

This study adopted a mixed method of concurrent triangulation and descriptive survey designs. Concurrent triangulation design enabled the researcher to give equal weighting to both quantitative and qualitative to provide a comprehensive analysis of the research problem. The design was also suitable because both types of data was collected, analyzed and interpreted at the same time. Descriptive survey design enabled the researcher to carry out the study in a natural state without alterations. It also enabled the researcher to study a relatively large population for accuracy of findings and was concerned with describing, recording, analyzing and recording the conditions that existed (Orodho, 2009). This provided a basis for analyzing the present situation and aid in making recommendations for future decision making concerning the learners with EBD.

Target population

The study targeted 60 head teachers and 510 regular school teachers in Madiany division, Siaya County. Teachers were targeted because they were always in touch with the EBD learners as they implement inclusive education. They were therefore better positioned to share experiences they undergo. They are also involved in the implementation and delivery of curriculum. The head teachers were targeted because a part from being classroom teachers, they have an administrative role of coordinating and supervising teaching and learning activities in the schools. Head teachers also admitted children to school and to various classes every year. They are charged with the responsibility of ensuring that the government policies are delivered and implemented by teachers and other stakeholders. Hence were in a position to provide required information on learners with Emotional and Behavioural Difficulties.

Sample and Sampling procedure

The study used simple random sampling which gives an equal chance to every item in the population to be selected as a sample to a research study. Head teachers were purposively sampled for the study because of their position and were deemed to have very important information required by the study. Cluster sampling was used because Madiany division is

further divided into zones and bases. Sampling of 117 teachers who took part in the study was carried out as in Table 1.

Table 1. Population sample frame for respondents (N=117)

Category	Sample size
Regular teachers	102
Head teachers	15

This study adopted cluster, purposive and simple random sampling techniques. Cluster sampling was used to select schools from the three zones in Madiany division. This involved taking a random sample of schools from every zone in their proportion. This also helped to ensure that the three zones in Madiany division were represented in the study in their proportion. Purposive sampling technique was used in selecting head teachers and regular school teachers were sampled using simple random sampling. The main purpose of simple random sampling is to enable a study to have a good sample representation of the entire population.

Research Instrument

The study used the following instruments:

Teacher questionnaire

The study used questionnaire with open and closed ended items. The questions were appropriate for the study because they were used to obtain data required by the study. It was also convenient to use a teacher questionnaire because the number of respondents was large for any other instrument to be used. The questionnaire covered both demographic information in regard to the objectives of the study and the respondent's opinion in regards to difficulties that the EBD learners faced in accessing the regular curriculum.

Interview schedule for head teachers

Interview schedule was used to gather information from the head teachers. Being classroom teachers as well as supervisors, they were expected to provide relevant information.

Pilot Study

Piloting was carried out in two schools in the County. The schools used for piloting were selected from the division. According to Orodho (2009), the essence of pre testing the questionnaire is to reveal rephrase unclear, vague and ambiguous questions; to detect deficiencies like unclear directions, insufficient space to write responses and to detect wrong phrasing of questions among others. The researcher carried out piloting to make items in the instrument clear, legible and easily understood by all respondents. The sample schools for piloting were not included in the study.

Validity and Reliability of the instruments

Validity is the extent to which the study instruments measure what they purport to measure. Acceptable level of research is dependent on logical reasoning, experience and

professionalism of a researcher (Wolverton, 2009). The researcher ensured validity of the questionnaires through expert judgment with the help of lecturers from Jaramogi Oginga Odinga University of Science and Technology (JOUST), who reviewed the instruments to ensure face validity, thereafter, the researcher incorporated the suggestions to improve validity. The researcher also used appropriate statistical technique in order to determine the structure of the questionnaire in ensuring construct validity. Reliability is the stability and consistency of the results when repeated measurements are taken of the same individuals under the same conditions. It is the extent to which results are consistent over time and accurate representation of the total population and if the results of a study can be reproduced under a similar methodology. Cohen *et al* (2007) posit that a measure is considered reliable if a person's score on the same test given twice is similar. They further argue that researchers originate from different backgrounds and have different interest and inclinations. In ensuring reliability, this particular study compared the findings from questionnaires from teachers and interview schedules from head teachers from the same schools to enhance validity.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Difficulties of accessing regular curriculum

In establishing the challenges/difficulties that the EBD learners face in accessing the regular curriculum, teacher was given a number of statements in regards to the curriculum challenges with which they would agree or disagree. Similarly, head teachers were asked several prompting questions on the challenges that faced the EBD learners in accessing the regular curriculum.

Curriculum challenges facing the EBD learners

(2011) commented that teachers do not have adequate skills and knowledge to necessary to manage EBD among learners. While 47.1% held the perception that peer teaching was sufficient in their schools, a majority 52.9% denied that peer teaching was adequate in their schools. Ong'era (2007) observed that peer teaching method is very beneficial to the EBD learners. It was established from the teachers that pupils in most schools were so many that giving individual attentions was a problem. Most teachers who took part in the study agreed it was not easy to give individualized attention to EBD learners. Otiato and Osong (2007) observed that EBD learners should be given individual attention in trying to modify their behaviour problems. It came out from 82.4% of the teacher participants that the 8-4-4 system of education in Kenya is not favorable for the truant learners and those with poor concentration and attention deficit to complete their studies. Wambua (2008) found out that the rigid system of education in Kenya (8-4-4) is such that children have to go through a particular program regardless of their special needs. 83.6% of the teacher participants equally refuted that time allocated for every lesson (35minutes) was enough to teach as well a manage some Emotional and Behaviour problems.

The study established that learners with Emotional and Behaviour difficulties in inclusive schools in Madiany division lack support from both teachers and fellow pupils thus often drop out of school. This came from 38.7% of the teachers. Ong'era (2007) observed that drop out is another challenge faced by learners with EBD due to internal and external factors. Although the findings of the study showed that some teachers in the schools were trained in special needs education and can professionally teach learners with Emotional and Behaviour Difficulties it emerged that that only 18.8% of the teachers were trained as Special Needs Education teachers. 55.3% of the participants alluded that many teachers in general education

Item	SA	A	D	SD
I feel inadequate, incompetent and impatient when handling learners with behaviour problems.	17 (20.0%)	37 (43.5%)	20 (23.5%)	11 (12.9%)
peer teaching is sufficient in this school	5 (5.9%)	35 (41.2%)	30 (35.3%)	15 (17.6%)
Pupils in this school are so many and giving individual attention is a problem.	36 (42.4%)	35 (41.2%)	9 (10.6%)	5 (5.9%)
I need more teaching and learning resources and aide-support to be able to teach learners with EBD.	36 (42.4%)	47 (55.3%)	0 (0.0%)	2 (2.4%)
The time allocated for every lesson, that is 35 minutes is enough to teach as well as manage different emotional and behaviour problems.	7 (8.2%)	7 (8.2%)	31 (36.5%)	40 (47.1%)
The 8-4-4 system of education in Kenya is favourable even to the truant learners and those with poor concentration and attention deficit to complete their studies.	3 (3.5%)	12 (14.1%)	31 (36.5%)	39 (45.9%)
Learners with emotional and behaviour difficulties in this school lack support from both teachers and fellow pupils thus often drop out of school.	11 (12.9%)	22 (25.8%)	34 (40.0%)	18 (21.2%)
Some teachers in this school are trained in special needs education and can professionally teach learners with emotional and behaviour difficulties.	16 (18.8%)	31 (36.5%)	33 (38.8%)	5 (5.9%)
Teachers who are trained to teach learners with EBD need to be motivated in their effort to help such learners.	30 (35.3%)	51 (60.0%)	4 (4.7%)	0 (0.0%)
Teachers in this school are always prepared for their lesson, besides, teaching aids are used.	20 (23.5%)	38 (44.7%)	23 (27.1%)	4 (4.7%)
As a teacher I can help create material for the EBD learners.	17 (20.0%)	54 (63.5%)	12 (14.1%)	2 (2.4%)
Co-teaching among general education and special education teachers is time consuming and difficult.	3 (3.5%)	28 (32.9%)	34 (40.0%)	20 (23.5%)

Difficulties/challenges of accessing the regular curriculum for the EBD learners

It was established that 63.5% teachers had inadequate training in the management of challenging behaviours of EBD learners therefore the study indicated that most teachers felt inadequate when teaching learners with behaviour problems. Fallow *et al*.

schools lack the skills and knowledge necessary to effectively offer the general curriculum to the EBD learners and to manage their behaviour problems. Kerr Oliver and Reshly (2006) found out that underlying key to teacher success was adequate preparation including that of teaching and learning resources. Besides lack of training, it was established that lack of motivation from among the teachers was an impediment to

accessing education by EBD learners. 95.3% of the teachers agreed that teachers who are trained to teach learners with EBD need motivation. Similarly, the study revealed that co-teaching among general education and special education teachers was time consuming and difficult but suitable method of teaching. Lack of adequate teaching and learning resources was also cited among the teachers in Madiany division as a stumbling block in accessing regular curriculum by the EBD learners as was expressed by 97.7% of the teachers who participated in the study. Kerr (2006) found out that proper materials and adequate relevant resources would enhance learning among the EBD learners. In a nut shell, it emerged from the study lack the skills and knowledge (competence), Lack of adequate teaching and learning resources, lack of trained personnel, the system of education in Kenya, some characteristics exhibited by the EBD learners like truancy, time allocated for every lesson, lack of motivation for the teachers and ineffective teaching and learning methods were cited by the teachers as a stumbling blocks in accessing the regular curriculum by and the EBD learners.

Recommendations

The study recommended that; the Teachers' Service Commission (TSC) should in service teachers on ways of modifying the curriculum to suit the learners with EBD, there should be constant capacity building to general education teachers on the ways of identifying and managing the learners who EBD, the government should employ at least one professional counsellor in every school to guide and counsel the EBD learners and that teachers should develop a positive attitude towards the EBD learners in order to sustain them in schools and reduce dropout rates among the learners.

Conclusion

The study concludes that behaviour problems like truancy, attention seeking behaviour, and attention deficit and hyperactivity disorders among others pose a challenge in accessing regular curriculum for these learners. Similarly, the study concludes that; the 8-4-4 system of education, lack of trained personnel, inadequate resources and poor interpersonal relationships are among the challenges that he EBD learners face in accessing the regular curriculum

REFERENCES

- Abrams, B. J. 2005. Becoming a therapeutic teacher for students with Emotional and Behavioural Difficulties. Teaching exceptional children. Network, Greenburg.
- Alvarez, H. K. 2007. The impact of teacher preparation on responses to students with aggression in the classroom: Teaching and Teacher Education.
- Bartak, L. and Fry, J. 2004. Are students with special needs in the mainstream? Adequately supported? *Australian Journal of Learning Disabilities*.
- Braun, V. and Clarke, V. 2006. Using thematic analysis in psychology. *Qualitative Research*. Pg 77-101 ISSN 1478-0887.
- Carroll, A., Forlin, C. and Jobling, A. 2003. The impact of Teacher training on special education. *Teacher Education Quarterly*.
- Culliman, D. 2007. Students with Emotional and Behavioural Disorders (EBD). Upper SaddleRiver. NJ: Merrill/Prentice Hall.
- Emam, M. M. and Farrel, P. 2009. Tension experienced by teachers and their views of support for children with EBD in mainstream schools. *European Journal of Special Needs Education*. Retrieved on 12TH Aug.2014.
- Groom, B. and Rose, R. 2004. Involving students with Emotional and Behavioural Difficulties in their own learning. London: Sage.
- Kauffman, J. M. and Landrum T.J. 2009. Characteristics of Emotional and Behavioural Disorders in children and youths (9thed.). Upper Saddle River. NJ: Prentice Hall.
- Kerr, M. M. and Nelson, C. M. 2006. Strategies for addressing behaviour problems in the classroom (5th Ed.) Upper Saddle River. NJ: Prentice Hall.
- McCarthy, E., Moloney, M. and Quigle, U. 2007. What difference working effectively With Children who have Special Needs in Early years. Limerick: Curriculum
- Mugenda, O. M. and Mugenda, A. G. 2008. Social Science Research Conception, Methodology and Analysis. Nairobi: Kenya.
- Oliver, R. M. and Rechly, D. J. 2010. Special Education Teacher Preparation in Classroom Management: Implications for children with emotional and behavioural disorders
- Ong'era, L. 2007. Emotional and Behavioural Difficulties. Nairobi: KISE
- Orodho, A. 2009. Elements of education and social science research methods (2nd Edition). Kanezja Hp Enterprises.
- Wambua, S. 2008. Curriculum and General Teaching Strategies for learners with EBD. Nairobi: KISE.
