

**TEACHER CHARACTERISTICS INFLUENCING PERFORMANCE OF
SPECIAL NEEDS LEARNERS IN THE MAINSTREAM PUBLIC
PRIMARY SCHOOLS IN KAKAMEGA EAST SUB – COUNTY, KENYA**

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DECLARATION

This research project is my original work and has not been presented for award of a degree in any other university

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This research project has been submitted for award of a degree with our approval as university supervisors.

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DEDICATION

I dedicate this project to my husband Caleb Litali; my mother Loice Jumba; my children; Gerry, Remicus, Shimron and Edgar.

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ABSTRACT

The purpose of this study was to investigate teachers characteristics influencing performance of special needs learners in the mainstream public primary schools in Kakamega East Sub-County, Kenya. The objectives of the study were: to establish teachers level of training, to examine methods used in teaching, to determine teachers preparation and investigate teachers perception towards special needs learners in the mainstream schools. The study was based on Vygotsky theory of proximal development. Descriptive survey design was used. The target population was 86 primary schools, 252 teachers 24 special needs teachers, 24 head teachers, 40 mainstream special needs pupils and 2 Educational Assessment Resource Centre officers. A total of 342 respondents were sampled for the study. Sample size comprised of 76 regular teachers, 7 special needs teachers, 12 mainstream special needs pupils, 24 head teachers and 2 Educational Assessment Resource Centre officers. The data was collected using questionnaires on the regular teachers, special needs teachers and special needs pupils. Interview guide was used on head teachers and Educational Assessment Resource Centre officers. Descriptive survey design was undertaken. Research instruments validity was established by test and test in piloting schools. Reliability of the research instruments was ascertained using Pearson product moment correlation coefficient of which the results gave value of +0.72. Data was collected and analysed both qualitatively and quantitatively and presented in frequencies and percentages in form of tables, pie charts and bar graphs. The study revealed that regular teachers had no training in SNE, lacked appropriate methods in teaching SNE learners, prepare inadequately and have negative perception on SNE learners. The study concluded that appropriate mechanism and structures should be put in place to train teachers in SNE. The study recommended that Kenya Institute of Special Education (KISE) and Ministry of Education Science and Technology (MOEST) should consider training more teachers in SNE.

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ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS

BED	Bachelor of Education
EARC	Educational Assessment Resource Centre
ECD	Early Childhood Development
EFA	Education for All
IDEA	Individuals with Disabilities Education Act
KCPE	Kenya Certificate for Primary Education
KISE	Kenya Institute of Special Education
MOEST	Ministry of Education Science and Technology
NACOSTI	National Commission for Science, Technology and Innovation
SEN	Special Education Needs
SN	Special Needs
SNE	Special Needs Education
SPSS	Statistical Package for Social Sciences
UIE	Uganda Institute of Education
UNESCO	United Nation Educational Scientific and Cultural Organization
UNICEF	United Nations Children Educational Fund
UPE	Universal Primary Education

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background to the study

Mainstreaming of children with special needs has been the movement throughout education life. The passing of the Education Act (1998) policy to promote and support pupils with special needs in mainstream paved way for concern in special needs education. Mainstream schools cater for all pupils including those with special needs. In some of the early literature on special education, integration was the word used instead of mainstreaming. The mainstream schools were referred to as ordinary schools. Integrations were regarded somehow unsatisfactory, as it conveys the notion of “average” rather than of “excellence” (Norwich, 2006). The term mainstreaming was widely used in the 1970s.

According to 1974, Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), which was updated in 2004. Children with disabilities are to be educated with non-disabled. Norwich (2006) viewed the need of educating the Special Needs learners alongside the rest of the school population as beneficial. Norwich (2006), states that mainstreaming is bringing pupils out of perceived isolation of special setting and into the mainstream of educational life. Although mainstreaming has been taking root in education, the success or failure of SNE learners, can be influenced by teacher’s characteristics. Teachers lack training knowledge, inadequate methods of teaching, positive perception and also are unprepared in

teaching SEN learners. This has an influence to the Special Needs learners' performance.

There has been significant development in the world on special education. The world conference on education for all in Jomtien Thailand (1990) recommended that children have a right to education regardless of individual differences. This was reaffirmed in Dakar Framework for Action (2000) which stated that in order to attract and retain children from marginalized and secluded groups, education system must be inclusive.

In (1994) world conference on Special Education took place in Salamanca Spain. Almost 100 countries and many other international organizations took part. This was concerned with education for all disabled children. Delegates called for inclusion in the schools. All special needs learners were universally accepted in the mainstream (Vlachou, 1999).

The Code of Practice (1994 and 2001) reinforced the acceptance view that SEN learners be educated in mainstream and minority of SEN learners with severe or complexity to be arranged for specific provision to cater for their learning. Cowries (2005) stated that parents of SEN learners did not have a say but according to Education Act (1996), parents of SEN learners with statements that showed that children are disabled would be able to say which mainstream school

they wished their child to attend. According to Kirby (2006), in earliest form in England, SEN pupils were required to adjust quickly as possible when mainstreamed but later, such schools changed the way of functioning gradually (Norwich, 2006). This implies some changes can be done to suit SEN learners in schools. Mainstreaming required that pupils with SEN should adjust as quickly as possible to mainstream structure of the school and as such, schools themselves can change the way of functioning, (Norwich 2006).

Uganda had learners with disabilities of which education increased by (1950's). Universal primary education (UPE) was adapted in (1979). Primary education was compulsory and free for all children This implied that learners with disabilities were mainstreamed (Randik, 2002). The Uganda Institute of Education (UIE) was formed for the purpose of training other special education needs teachers in diploma, degree and post graduate level through in-service and distance education programmes (Randik, 2002).

Koech report (Koech, 1999) observed that the goal of education was to provide equal opportunities for all children with special needs, hence formation of total quality integrated education which was comprehensive frame work that addresses previously omitted aspect of education including special education.

In the Sessional paper (2005), the government of Kenya, agreed that children be educated through the mainstream classes and those with severe or have multiple disabilities be educated in special units.

The Kenya Institute of Special Education (KISE) was established by the government to provide training of special needs education teachers in all areas of special education. In the Sessional paper GOK (2005), the government saw the need to expand training of more teachers in special education programmes so that the trained teachers may be assigned work in special education offices and teach in mainstreamed schools. Most teachers acquire diploma level of education in SNE which some may advance to acquire their Bachelor's degrees and more. Most teachers acquire these levels for upward move on their pay but not addressing the issue of specialty in SNE. The same KISE trains teachers in different methods to use in teaching special needs learners.

The Kenya Constitution (2010) on education, the government intends to improve the quality and access to education for children with special needs. Majority of these children do not access quality education. The Education For All (EFA) goals for (2015) state that everyone has a right to education; unfortunately, it has not yet been put in place properly according to the Sessional paper (2005). Children with special needs have been mainstreamed in primary schools and others are in special units, while some have not (Forum report, 2000).

The special needs learners in the mainstream still experience problems with the teachers. Amanda (2007), indicated that teachers did not feel prepared or confident in their own abilities or experience to provide inclusive environment for learners with special needs. Amanda, (2007) talks of teachers' preparedness in terms of ability and experience but falls short of the actual preparations and their perceptions. The possible influence on performance is minimal.

Table 1.1 reveals that the number of learners mainstreamed and those who sat for their KCPE is low and that their performance is wanting in Kakamega East Sub County. This indicates that teacher's characteristics may play a role in the low performance. Hence the need for this study. Table 1.1 displays mainstreamed learners registered for KCPE, their scores and school mean score in every zone of the Sub County.

Table 1.1**Mainstreamed learners registered for KCPE and their scores**

Zone	Year	No. of SNE learners registered for KCPE	Marks obtained in KCPE out of 500	Mean score for the school
South	2011			249.76
	2012			250.89
	2013	1	175	240.50
	2014	2	124,130	235.05
Central	2011			268.82
	2012	1	137	254.23
	2013	1	125	176.80
	2014			266.40
West	2011			225.98
	2012			258.18
	2013	1	137	260.83
	2014	1	150	261.68
Ileho	2011			239.82
	2012			264.90
	2013	1	180	272.07
	2014	1	172	263.06

Source: EARC D.E.O's office Kakamega East Sub County 2014

1.2 Statement of the problem

Education for all and the MDG goals have made Kenya work towards achieving mainstreaming. However, special needs learners while in the mainstream schools, encounter a variety of problems with the teachers. In the mainstream schools, teachers are not trained on how to handle SN learners. Wornock, (2006) states that lack of training specialists is a potential barrier for successful implementation of SNE programme. The code of practice in Sessional paper (1994 and 2001) aims at enabling SEN pupils to reach their full potentials both academically and socially. Therefore, SN learners need proper handling while in the mainstream, to perform along with peers.

Kakamega East Sub County has 86 public primary schools; 24 schools out of 86 have special units, where most SN learners are in the mainstream. The Education Officer Kakamega East County has recorded performance of mainstreamed learners as indicated in Table 1.1. The findings were 500 SN learners are in the mainstream and one or two manage to reach class eight and are enrolled to do KCPE. The results in Table 1.1 show the average mark of 250. This leads to low performance in the Sub County. Results of the learners in a few schools in the four zones in Kakamega East Sub County are below average. This lowers the mean score of schools when SNE learners are enrolled for KCPE.

A lot reveals that systems have been set to address special need learners in Kenya including Sessional papers that focus on how to assist SNE pupils. Studies are silent on addressing teacher characteristics that contribute to the mainstreamed learners. The researcher examined teachers characteristics influencing performance of special needs learners in mainstream public primary schools Kakamega East Sub County.

1.3 Purpose of the study

The study aimed to investigate teachers' characteristics influencing performance of special needs learners in mainstream public primary schools in Kakamega East, Sub-County, Kenya.

1.4 Objectives of the study

The objectives of this study were:

- i. To establish the extent to which teachers' level of training influence performance of special needs learners in the mainstream public primary schools in Kakamega East sub-County.
- ii. To examine teachers' teaching methods and their influence on performance of special needs learners in the mainstream public primary schools in Kakamega East Sub-County.

- iii. To determine teachers' preparations and their influence on performance of special needs learners in the mainstream public primary schools in Kakamega East Sub-County.
- iv. To investigate the extent to which teachers perception influence performance of special need learners in the mainstream public primary schools in Kakamega East sub-county.

1.5 Research questions

The study was guided by the following questions.

- i. What level of training of teachers teaching special needs learners influence performance of special need learners in the mainstream public primary schools in Kakamega East Sub-County?
- ii. What are the teaching methods used by teachers that influence performance of special needs learners in the mainstream public primary schools in Kakamega East Sub-County?
- iii. How does teachers' preparations influence performance of special needs learners in the mainstream public primary schools in Kakamega East Sub-County?
- iv. To what extent does teachers' perception influence the performance of special education needs learners in the mainstream public primary schools in Kakamega East Sub-County?

1.6 Significance of the study

The study may provide useful information to other teachers to develop positive perceptions towards learners with special needs in the mainstream and to use suitable methods in imparting knowledge to learners with special needs. The study may assist policy makers in setting strategies to improve performance in the mainstream schools and may be essential for training of future primary teachers.

1.7 Limitations of the study

Some of the limitation of the study were the responses of the respondents who may have been affected by professional qualification and feared victimization. This could make them respond in a manner to appear social. Otherwise, the researcher assured confidentiality on the filling of the questionnaires and the responses on the interview guide.

1.8 Delimitations of the study

The study was conducted in public primary schools with special needs learners in the mainstream schools of Kakamega East Sub-county. Thus, it did not consider other private primary schools, Early Childhood Development (ECD), secondary and technical schools because the study focused on mainstream public primary schools where most SNE learners are found. The study dealt with special needs teachers, special needs pupils, head teachers, EARC officers and regular teachers in the mainstream school to investigate on performance of special needs learners.

1.9 Assumptions of the study

In this study, the following assumptions were made.

- (i) The respondents provided sincere and honest views that were accurate and relevant to the study.
- (ii) The respondents were aware of mainstream SNE learners who can learn successfully with other pupils.

1.10 Definition of significant terms

The following terms were defined in the context of the study.

Characteristics refer to features or qualities belonging typically to a person.

Inclusion refers to education of children with disabilities learning in regular class.

Teaching methods refer to the manner in which content is presented to the learners by the teachers.

Teachers perception refers to the way teachers look at SNE learners and think about them.

Regular teachers refer to teachers teaching in normal classes.

Special education refers to education given to learners with disabilities.

Special needs refer to pupils who require proper guidance and attention by teachers.

Special units refer to units within regular schools that SN learners are handled.

Teachers preparation refers to the way teachers plan schemes of work, make lessons and teaching resources in readiness to attend to pupils in class.

Teachers level of training refer to grades teachers acquire after going through teaching processes.

1.11 Organization of the study

The study was organized in five chapters. Chapter one dealt with background of the study, statement of the problem , purpose of the study, objectives of the study, research questions, significance of the study, limitations and delimitations of the study, assumptions and definitions of significant terms. Chapter two covered teachers training level, methods of teaching, teachers' preparations, teachers' perceptions, summary of the literature review, theoretical framework and conceptual framework. Chapter three had research design, target population, sample size and sampling techniques, research instruments, validity and reliability of the instruments, data collection procedures and data analysis technique. Chapter four had data analysis presentation and interpretation while chapter five consisted of summary, conclusions and recommendations.

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Introduction

This chapter deals with literature review under the following topics. Teachers level of training and influence on performance of special needs learners in the mainstream, teaching methods and their influence on performance of special needs learners in the mainstream, teachers preparation and influence on performance of special needs learners in the mainstream and teachers' perception and influence on performance of special needs learners in the mainstream schools. The chapter also includes summary of literature review, theoretical framework and conceptual frame work.

2.2 Concept of SNE learners

The SNE learners are those pupils who have disabilities. Hergarty et al 1981 investigated the implementation of curriculum for learners with special needs in ordinary schools by mainstreaming rather than specialist teachers. The finding were that there was little information about techniques for educating these pupils. The teachers showed many ways they used to teach the learners but the major concept was to give more attention to SNE learners.

2.3 Teachers' level of training and performance of special needs learners

Training of teachers in Kenya is taking a new trend due to the curriculum changes and educational policies put in place by the government. Free and compulsory education (FPE), Education for All (EFA), Sessional Paper one (GOK, 2005), all aim to improve education of both teachers and learners. Training of teachers in SNE has been introduced at Kenya Institute of Special Needs Education (KISE). The training focus on skills of handling special needs learners. The teachers are also trained on subject and subject matter to be taught.

Teachers trained at KISE by the government are very few. According to GOK (2002), one of the objectives of teachers training in special education is to gain knowledge which play part in the amount of child's educational needs and execution of any special measure prescribed. The training gives teachers what special education is like together with knowledge or range of various form of special educational provision and of specialist advisory service (Panda, 1997).

Research conducted in the United States of America and Canada, agree that teacher's professional and subject knowledge is the key to improvement of student's achievement (Thomas (2008). In America teachers have been trained up to master and doctoral level to deal with special needs learners (Thomas, 2008). A case study by UNESCO (2009), show that Ministry of Education in Thailand has been focusing on development of teachers professional skills to handle

learners with disabilities while removing untrained teachers. All teachers receive a course on teaching children with special needs within their basic teachers training course.

In Europe there have been teachers of special needs learners that is the deaf since 1700 and their specialist knowledge, skills and support of other teachers are highly valued (Farrel, 2012). In this case, knowledge gaining is observed through training or courses being an important aspect in teaching. In England special education teachers were trained to work solely with children with SEN (Garner, 2002).

In Kenya, the teachers for special needs in primary schools are only trained at Kenya Institute of Special Education (KISE). Warnock (2002) report recommended that initial teacher training should contain coverage of SEN to ensure new teachers develop necessary skills. Garner (2003), states that adequate training and in-service training programmes for teachers who deal with the disabilities has been less. Regular teachers are involved in programmes for the disabilities without any training. They mostly do not understand these learners at times because SNE learners are handled the same way with the normal learners leading to frustration (GOK, 2001). The schools and other training agencies are currently ill equipped to provide the needed training. They are ill-equipped to provide suitable models of teaching procedures and their interpersonal relation

with special needs learners is not pleasing. The teachers in the mainstream may have limited skills in demonstrating specific remedial teaching procedures. It might be better to employ trained teachers on the disabilities to teach and to offer demonstration, practical and internship which are vital (Freiberg, 1985).

Improvement is needed for effective training. Use of video tapes, lessons and discussions and laboratory sessions are essential. There should be intensive upgrading of the applied aspect of teacher training by all means available. Programmes with demonstration teaching involving the “team approach “includes the utilization of resource person in evaluating, planning programmes and carrying out the subsequent applications are needed. Lipsky and Gartner (1987) reported that this calls for substantial amount of money and time until the adequate pool of well trained teachers for the disabilities are available, who can utilize fully, modern techniques of evaluation and who can utilize other personnel in cooperative efforts in the programme. Basing on the information in this literature, the Kenya system of training SNE at KISE does not completely help in dealing with the problem of special needs learners mainstreamed in public primary schools. These pupils are left with the regular teachers who don't understand special need learners. Report in the literature GOK (2001) indicates that most learners get frustrated resulting from teachers not understanding their plight. In view of this, the researcher wish to understand if the level of training of these teachers assist special need learners perform in their final examinations.

2.4 Teachers' teaching methods and performance of special needs learners

Senior and Flemming (2006) established that the world has changed and will continue changing. This is a challenge to the planners and implementers of education across the world because the education institutions of today operate under increasing demand for change due to emerging abilities and disabilities among learners together with the forces of globalization and technological advancement. This calls for reorientation of education programmes and practices to cater for all types of young people in the world which is the foundation of the concept on all inclusive education. This is because appropriate education has long been recognized as the only solution to the complex problems facing humanity across the globe (Otieno, 2002). In response to the increasing challenges in the ever-changing world, most countries across the globe are increasingly adapting and striving to implement all inclusive education programmes and mainstreaming aimed at achievement of dramatic and continuous improvement in socio-economic development of communities. This explains why in the past years both developed and developing countries have accepted and embraced implementation of all inclusive forms of education as part of an international agenda in line with the UNESCO (2016).

To be a good teacher you need to adapt acceptable styles of teaching. Teaching is an art (Binner, 1994). Teaching methods are actually teaching styles a teacher uses to present to the learners the subject matter Brownwell, (2007). Teaching

needs more styles to match the learning of learners with special needs who have varied abilities. The methods used in provision of SEN learners in the mainstream should be learner centered. The teaching includes methods like demonstration, discussion and assimilation. In the demonstration method, the teacher experiments or show examples while learners observe. In the discussion method, the teacher directs learners to exchange views and arrive at a collective discussion, while in assimilation, the teacher directs learners to a play role or games of real life situation. These methods promote learning.

For teachers to successfully include all learners in a lesson, they have to realize the ability of every child in the classroom and it is their responsibility to find out how to work with and plan for each child. The teacher has to effectively use a variety of instructional strategies for entire learning process. Teachers are supposed to use variety of teaching methods for example learner centered lessons, which are task oriented and facilitate understanding in learners (Eken, 2000).

A research carried out by Ngonga (2000) revealed that Kenyan students perform poorly due to poor teaching methods whereby instructors develop teaching styles based on their own beliefs and personal preferences. This is done in disregard of learners needs. Most teachers do not understand special need learners since training does not involve SNE training (MOEST, 2006). Eken (2000) states that teachers in the mainstream need to adapt variety of teaching methods for learners

to do well and excel. There is very little on how special need learners mainstreamed in public primary school are handled. This has prompted the researcher to examine the various methods used by teachers in teaching all learners and how SNE learners in the mainstream are catered for.

2.5 Teachers' preparations and performance of special needs learners

For teachers to successfully include all learners in a lesson, they have to realize that every child in the classroom is their responsibility and they have to prepare how to work with each child. The teacher has to effectively prepare a variety of instructional strategies including their ability to adapt to the learning activities and the entire learning process. The teacher therefore needs skills to adapt the approved curriculum, prepare materials and rewrite objectives for a child's needs without necessarily training in special education proficiency Course Training Manual, (2010).

According to Gullet (1975), communication is important because it helps people share knowledge, this enables them to expand on it and also store. Communication serves as a linkage process by which parts of the system are tied. In this case education cannot be exceptional since knowledge need to be shared and expanded in the field of education.

Teachers need to prepare to communicate in the classroom. This is important in teaching for learning to take place MOEST (2001). Teachers communicate with learners through talking, use of facial expression and gestures. However, facial expressions will not cater for SN learners who are visually handicapped. MOEST (2001) states that there are two types of communication disorders. These are speech and language disorders. Teachers should make sure that what they say in class mostly for visually handicapped learners is pronounced and spoken clearly MOEST (2001). The visually handicapped are among the SN learners in the mainstream. This will enable them to progress with the peers.

Learners with hearing impairment in SEN experience problems in the mainstream. Teachers in the mainstream need to learn and prepare for sign language. Farrel (2012) Indicates that sign language is different in many countries such as America, Islam or British languages have similarities but distinctive features. Total teaching of such children includes full spectrum of the language modes for example gestures, the language signs, speech reading, finger spellings reading and writing.

Teachers need to prepare words or pictures to communicate in class, Farrell (2008). These are used as teaching aids and communicate to learners when teachers are teaching. Teaching aids make teachers communication in the class easier and reinforce the learning. They also enhance the learning mostly to

learners with hearing problems and the entire class. Teachers dealing with learners with SN speech disorders should be patient always to let the child say what they want and also be sure the sentences used for communication to these learners are simple and very clear MOEST (2001). MOEST Guidance and counseling module (2004) states that teachers require to use appropriate body language. Rising of voice for SEN learner with hearing impairment. Vocal qualities play an important role. Therefore, teachers should be audible in class for proper learning to take place.

Jangua 2005 indicated that teachers prepare lesson plans as a matter of requirement and also do it when followed by administrators. This means teachers do not embrace lesson planning. This implies that more need to be done in encouraging teachers to prepare lesson plans and schemes.

Arunga (2007) points out that teachers are encouraged to rethink the usefulness of preparing lesson plans as a critical tool for lesson delivery. During preparations teachers should put into consideration learners disabilities. This should include their needs in relation to the topic of the lesson. Teachers need variety of activities that can be interesting to learners when preparing lesson plans and schemes. Kimani (2010) observed that lessons are designed to have sufficient and varied activities to enable the learners get meaningful experiences.

According to Ambaso (2008), teachers lack time to prepare lesson plans, schemes of work and adequate resources for large classes. Large classes make teachers not to attend to individual learner and this becomes a barrier to SNE learners in the mainstream.

Students with learning disabilities achieve more when lessons are clearly presented, sequenced and well organized; teachers' explanation should be concise and clearly understood with major concept highlighted content and presentation should vary according to each child's unique abilities and weakness (Farrant, (2004).

2.6 Teachers' perception and performance of special need learners

Perception is the way teachers look and think about learners Krozynsk, (2002) established that, negative teachers perception affect the learners with disabilities in the mainstream public primary schools in China and the teachers are perceived to be part of the implementation (Mittler, 2004). It is important to examine teachers' perception towards inclusion of pupils with disabilities into the mainstream. Agbenyenga, (2006), established that many regular teachers feel unprepared and fear to work with learners with disabilities in the mainstream. Teachers also feel the learners will affect the academic performance of the class.

According to UNESCO (2003), teachers in training colleges develop in knowledge and skills but less about perception. The attitude and value depend on teachers experience with learners perceived to be challenging (UNESCO, 2005). There is need to create awareness on the perception programmes like inclusive education to eradicate beliefs and taboos that are associated with disabilities in teachers (MOEST, 2004). Teachers need to change from traditions that hinder advancement of disabled learners (UNESCO, 2005). Mittler (2009) stated that, if teachers have negative perception towards learners in inclusion, this may block any chance of learning in the mainstream or regular classes.

Singal (2006) concluded that many teachers believe that children who need academic moderation would be unstable to cope with the level of academic demand in the mainstream and also notes that inclusion programmes are not fruitful for average teacher or child. There is negative correlation between learners academic ability and their level of disability such as dyslexia or autism (Slavin, 2011). This implies that teachers should understand the SN learners.

2.7 Summary of literature review

Concept of mainstreaming has received legal backing which stresses that SNE learners be educated in least restrictive environment. The reviewed literature revealed that much has been done in many countries. Research conducted in Unites States of America and Canada agree that teachers professional and subject

knowledge is the key to improvement of students achievement (Thomas 2008). In America, teachers train up to master and doctoral level to deal with SNE learners (Thomas, 2008). A case study by UNESCO (2009), show that Ministry of Education in Thailand has been focusing on development of teachers professional skills to handle learners with disabilities while removing untrained teachers.

A research carried out by Ngonga (2000), revealed that Kenyan students perform poorly due to poor teaching methods whereby instructors develop teaching method based on their own belief and personal preferences. This is done in disregard of learners needs. According to Jangaa (2005), teachers prepare lesson plans as a matter of requirement and also do it when followed by administrators. This shows they do not embrace preparations of professional documents.

Mitter (2009), stated that, if teachers have negative perception towards learners in inclusion, this may block any chance of learning in the mainstream. Reviewed literature has however not revealed teacher characteristics influencing performance of special needs learners in the mainstream public primary schools in Kakamega East Sub-County. Hence the need to carryout this study.

2.8 Theoretical framework

This study was guided by Vygotsky theory (1987-1998) of Proximal Development which discusses learning and teaching of children with special

needs. According to the theory, children can perform better when they have proper assistance by adults and capable peers. This theory advocates the process of “scaffolding”. In this case, children with special needs are to be supported by professional personnel and peers who are capable.

In mainstream classes, it is not easy to identify the weakness and strength of the learners. The theory is applicable to the study because SN learners in the mainstream interact and are supported by teachers and peers in their learning. The improvement on teacher’s knowledge and skills by training, use of appropriate teaching methods, teachers preparation and change in their perception on special needs learners in the mainstream, will develop the learners to their highest level and will realize full potential since disability is not inability. The teachers should be equipped with skills to handle SNE learners in the mainstream. Katarina (2006) asserts that teachers are the key in nurturing self-concept of pupils with special needs.

2.9 Conceptual framework

A conceptual framework conceptualizes or represents the relationships between variables in the study and shows the relationship graphically or diagrammatically.

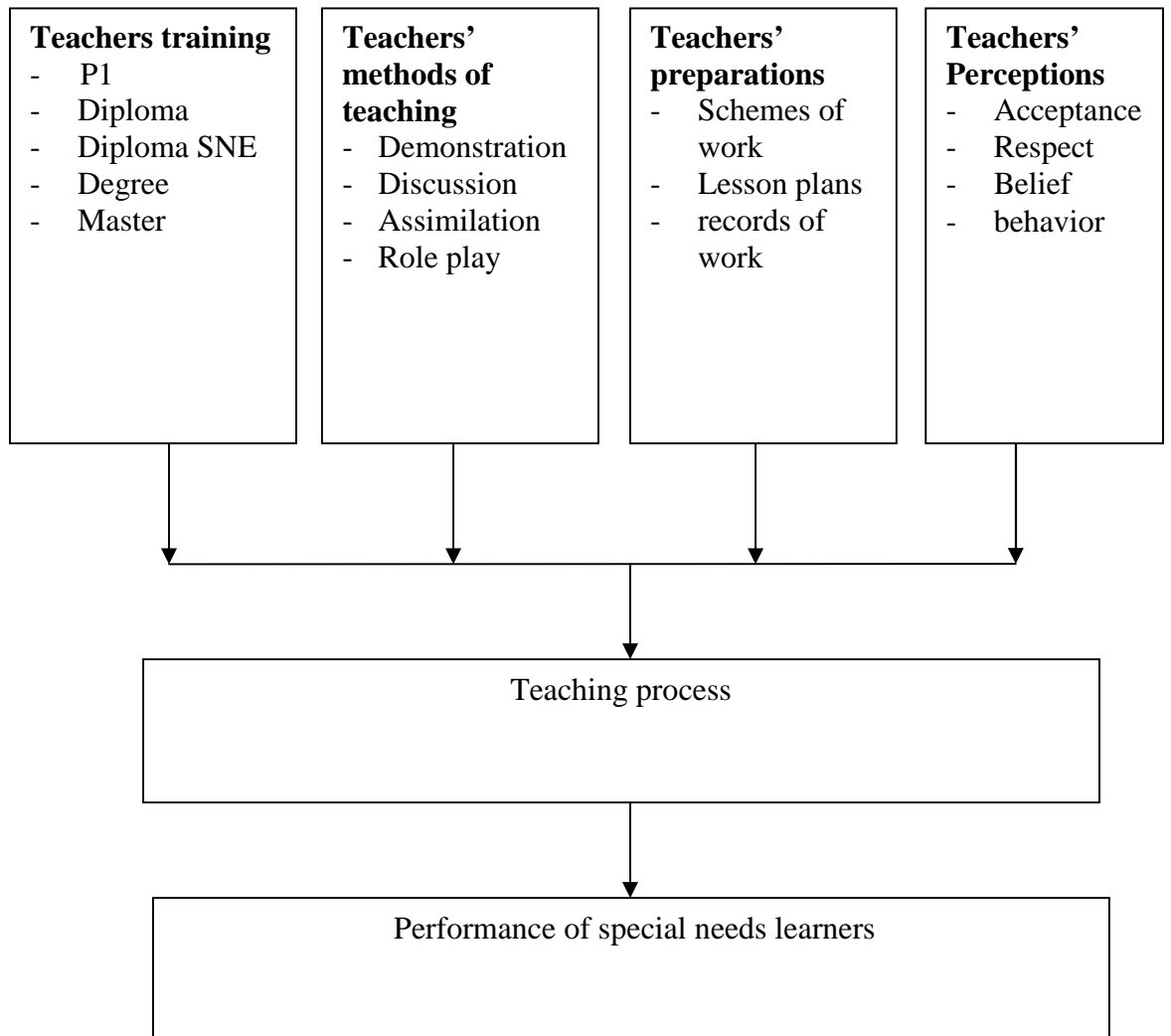


Figure 2.1: Conceptual framework on teacher’s characteristics influencing special needs learners

The conceptual frameworks suggest that SN learners in the mainstream need teachers who are trained in special education and have acquired proper methods for teaching SN learners. Those SNE learners need teachers who prepare for working in class and have positive perception. This will lead teachers in the mainstream increase in participation and hence performance of SN learners.

CHAPTER THREE

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1 Introduction

This chapter includes procedures used in conducting the study. The section focused on research design, target population, sample size and sampling procedures, research instruments, validity of the instruments, reliability of the instruments, data collection procedures and analysis.

3.2 Research design

The study adapted descriptive survey. According to Orodho (2002), the survey allows researcher to gather information, summarize, interpret for the purpose of clarification. According to Willington (2000) the design gathers data from the relatively larger number of cases at a particular time, thus it's the best method used by scientists in collecting data that is used in describing a population that is large. Descriptive survey generalizes the findings. Therefore, the design was suitable for the study. Interview schedule was used to generate qualitative data for investigation. Open ended questions provided structured statement which required explanation, descriptions and personal comments.

3.3 Target population

Kakamega East Sub-county has 4 zones, South, Central, West and Ileho. There are 86 regular schools. The regular teachers trained in these schools were 252

which the researcher targeted. There were 76 regular teachers, 24 administrators, 24 special needs teachers, 40 SNE pupils and 2 EARC officers forming a total of 342 respondents. 24 schools with special units were used for this study.

Source: DEO's office Kakamega East Sub-County 2014

3.4 Sample size and sampling procedures

Purposive sampling was used to select EARC officers and head teachers. Stratified random sampling was used to sample SNE teachers, regular teachers and SNE pupils. Stratified random sampling was applied because according to Mugenda and Mugenda (1999) it provides equal chances for each member of the target population. Kerlinger, (2004), established that, an ideal sample size should be between 10% and 30% of the target population while (Kathori, 2003) established that adaptation of bigger sample size enhances the equality of the research findings. On this basis, a sample size of 30% of target population was 76 regular teachers 7 special needs teachers, 24 head teachers 12 mainstream SNE pupils and 2 EARC officers.

Table 3.1

Sample frame

Category	Target population	Sample size
Regular teachers	252	76
SNE teachers	24	7
Head teachers	24	24
Mainstreamed SNE pupils	40	12
EAR officers	2	2
Total	342	121

3.5 Research instruments

The study adapted the questionnaire for regular teachers, SNE teachers and SNE pupils. Interview guide for administrators and EARC officers. The questionnaire has the advantages of confidentiality, saves on time and allows information to be collected from a large sample and from diverse regions Kombo and Tromp, (2007). The questionnaire was divided into specific sections that adequately captured all the study variables as presented in the conceptual framework. It consisted of both open ended and closed ended questions which were filled and others ticked. Interview schedule was administered by the researcher with the main target being EARC who are District education officers and head teachers. This method was time saving as respondents answered what had been asked by

the researcher and was reliable since the questions were similar comprehensive, systematic hence formulated prior to the actual day (Kombo & Tromp, 2007).

Interview schedule had probing and posing of follow-up questions which provided information about respondents' internal feelings and thinking about the study constructs. The responses and observation from interview schedules were recorded by hand written notes using key words and phrases. Detailed notes from interviewees were written by the researcher for easy compilation and coding with other study results.

3.6 Validity of research instruments

The validity of the study was obtained through piloting of research instruments. The questionnaires and interview schedule were randomly distributed to the respondents in the pilot schools. After one week, the same items were administered to some respondents and the results compared to determine validity of the instruments. The piloting helped the researcher to realize shortcoming of the research instruments.

3.7 Reliability of the instruments

Reliability of instrument is the extent to which an instrument used yield the same results when repeated trials are done or are consistent in the scores Orodho (2009). The researcher tested and retested by administering the test after an

internal of two weeks to establish if the items in the questionnaire and interview yielded the same results. The reliability was computed using Pearson's product of moment correlation coefficient of which the result gave positive value of +0.72 which is acceptable Mugenda and Mugenda (2000).

$$r = \frac{n \sum xy - (\sum x)(\sum y)}{\sqrt{(n \sum x^2 - (\sum x)^2)(n \sum y^2 - (\sum y)^2)}}$$

Where

$\sum x$ = the sum of scores in the x test

$\sum xy$ = the sum of scores in the y test

$\sum x^2$ = the sum of the squared scores in the y test

$\sum y^2$ = the sum of the squared scores in the y test

$\sum xy$ = the sum of the product of point x and y

N= the number of points x and y scores

3.8 Data collection procedure

The researcher obtained permission from Department of National Commission for Science and Technology and Innovation (NACOSTI). The researcher further sought permission from the DEO and the head teachers to carry out the study in selected primary schools in Kakamega East Sub – County. The researcher collected the data using a questionnaire and interview schedules. The questionnaires were filled by regular teachers and SNE teachers, mainstreamed

SNE pupils while EARC officers and administrators were subjected to interview schedules. The interview schedule was provided to EARC officers and administrators in their offices by the researcher who posed the questions and recorded the respondents observations using key words and phrases which were hand written.

3.9 Data analysis technique

Data analysis technique involves examining what the researcher have collected and making decision plus inferences (Kombo & Tromp 2006). Data analysis refers to the process in which raw data is ordered and organized to make it useful information. The study applied both qualitative and quantitative description to process data. Qualitative data was obtained from open ended questions. This started with processing and editing the questionnaires to minimize errors. Descriptive statistics was in form of frequency and distribution tables plus percentage. The statistical package for social sciences (SPSS) version 22 was used to make a descriptive analysis, give percentages and frequency distribution which was data systematically for reporting.

3.10 Ethical considerations

According to Mugenda and Mugenda (1999), ethical considerations are important for any research issues including proper conduct of the researcher during the research process, avoidance of plagiarism and fraud. Confidentiality and privacy

of the information obtained from the respondent is crucial. Volunteer and informed consent from the respondents and dissemination of the findings were all adhered to during the study. Therefore, an ethical authorization was sought from the National Council of Science and Technology (NACOSTI). A consideration such as non-intrusive methods at various levels either by question or procedure that would embarrass the respondents was avoided. Personal data was collected, handled and stored with confidentiality and was only used for this study.

CHAPTER FOUR

DATA ANALYSIS, PRESENTATION AND INTERPRETATION

4.1 Introduction

This chapter presents findings of the study, which have been discussed under the four key thematic subsections in line with the study objectives. The discussion is preceded with general subsections on demographic information of the respondents. The thematic subsection include; teachers level of training, methods teachers used, teachers preparations in teaching special needs learners, teachers perception and their influence on performance of special need learners in the mainstream public primary schools in Kakamega East Sub-county. The chapter also includes qualitative and quantitative data analysis represented in tables, bar graphs, piecharts and interpretations.

4.2 Questionnaire return rate

The questionnaires and interview guides were distributed among 121 respondents who included 76 regular teachers, 7 SNE teachers 12 SNE mainstream pupils. 24 head teachers and 2 EARC officers were interviewed. All the questionnaires were returned. This was 100% return rate.

4.3 Demographic information of the respondents

The section presents the demographic information of respondents' in terms of gender, age and working experience of teachers. To determine gender,

respondents were asked to indicate whether they were male or female. Table 4.1 shows regular teachers and SNE teacher by gender.

Table 4.1

Regular teachers and SNE teachers by gender

Gender	Regular teachers		SNE Teachers	
	F	%	F	%
Male	27	35.5	3	42.9
Female	49	64.5	4	57.1
Total	76	100	7	100

Table 4.1 revealed that majority of the regular teachers and SNE teachers were female as indicated by 49(64.5%) and 4(57.1%) respectively. These concurs with the results earlier studied by Okumbe (1992) which revealed that female teachers were higher than male in teaching profession.

Table 4.2

Distribution of head teachers and EARC officers by gender

Gender	Head teachers		EARC officers	
	F	%	F	%
Male	20	83.3	2	100
Female	4	16.7	0	0
Total	24	100.0	2	100.0

The study revealed that most of the head teachers were male. These is indicated by 20 (83.3%) while female were (16.7%). EARC officers were only male. This shows gender disparity in Kakamega East Sub-County where the administrators are dominated by male.

Table 4.3

Mainstream SNE pupils by gender

Gender	F	%
Boys	7	58.0
Girls	5	42.0
Total	12	100.0

The study revealed that most of the pupils were boys 7(58.0%) while the girls were 5(42%). This indicates that more boys are tolerant than girls to school regulations.

4.3.1 Age bracket of respondents

The regular teachers, SNE teachers, head teachers, mainstream SNE pupils and EARC officers were asked to indicate their age bracket. These would enable the researcher to establish if age of regular teachers, SNE teachers, head teachers and EARC officers influence the SNE learners' performance. The age brackets of regular and SNE teachers are shown in table 4.4.

Table 4.4

Distribution of regular teachers and SNE teachers by age

Age bracket	Regular teachers		SNE teachers	
	F	%	F	%
20 – 30 years	10	13.2	1	14.3
31 – 40 years	29	38.2	3	42.9
41 – 50 years	21	27.5	2	28.5
Above 50 years	16	21.1	1	14.3
Total	76	100.0	7	100.0

The data in Table 4.4 indicated that the majority of the teachers both regular and SNE were in the age bracket 31-40 years. Regular teachers 29 (38.2%) and SNE teachers 3 (42.9%). A few were relatively above 50 years. This findings indicates that majority of teachers were middle aged and can do better work in securing SNE learners. According to UNESCO 2004, the age of a teacher is important as it proves the general measure of experience that one has in profession assuming that the period given is the one spent by the teacher in syllabus content delivery. The researcher also interviewed the head teachers and EARC officers on age. Table 4.5 indicates the findings.

Table 4.5

Distribution of head teachers and EARC officers by age

Age bracket	Head teachers		EARC officers	
	F	%	F	%
31 -40 Years	2	8.3	0	0
41 – 50 Years	13	54.2	0	0
Above 50 years	9	37.5	2	100
Total	24	100.0	2	100.0

The data in Table 4.5 revealed that majority of the head teachers were in the age bracket 41-50 years as indicated by 13(54.2%) while EARC officers were above 50 years. This revealed that head teachers and EARC officers were elderly. The

researcher also sought to find out the age bracket of mainstreamed pupils. Table 4.6 displays the findings.

Table 4.6

Distribution of mainstream SNE pupils by age

Age bracket	F	%
8 – 10 years	1	8.0
10 – 12 years	1	8.0
12 – 14 years	2	17.0
14 – 16 years	2	17.0
16 – 18 years	6	50.0
Total	12	100.0

The findings in Table 4.6 revealed that majority of the pupils were in the age bracket 16-18 years, indicated by 6(50.0%). While the youngest were in the age bracket 8 – 10 indicated by 1(8%). This implies that most pupils were over age. The average age at primary level is fourteen years of age. The age of the child may dedicate the attitude towards learning and hence performance.

4.3.2 Number of years teachers had served

The regular teachers, SNE teachers, head teachers were asked to indicate the number of years they had served to investigate if experience influences the

performance of SNE learners. The number of years regular teachers and SNE teachers had served. This is indicated in Table 4.7.

Table 4.7
Number of years teachers had served

No. of years	Frequency	Percent
Less than 2 years	7	8.4
3- 4 years	12	14.5
Over 5 years	64	77.1
Total	83	100.0

Table 4.7 revealed that most of the teachers had served in the mainstream schools for over 5 years indicated by 64 (77.1%). A few had served 3-4 years 12(14.5%) and less than 2 years 7(8.4%). This is an indication that most teachers both regular and SNE had enough experience on special needs learners. The researcher interviewed the head teachers on years they had served in their present schools. The results were as shown in Table 4.8.

Table 4.8

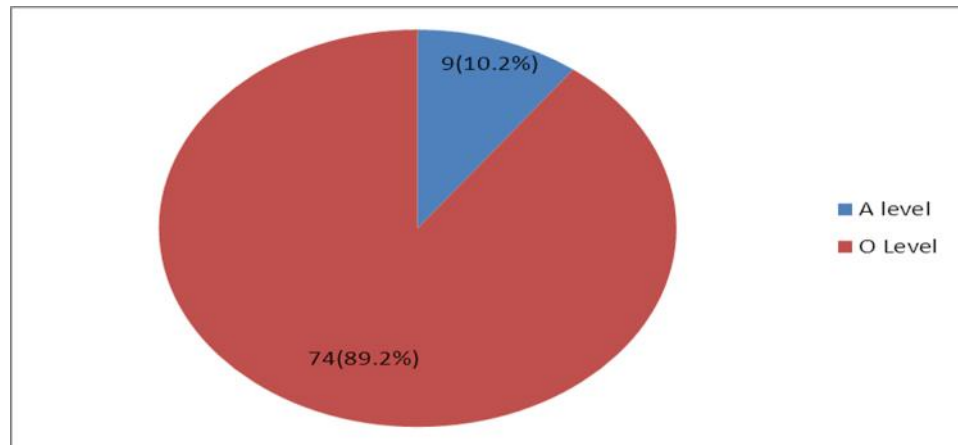
Number of years head teachers had served in their current schools

No. of years	Frequency	Percentage
Less than 2 years	4	16.7
3-4 years	8	33.3
Over 5 years	12	50.0
Total	24	100.0

The findings from Table 4.8 revealed that majority of the head teachers have served for over 5 years indicated by 12(50%). Those who have served less than 2 years 4(16.7) and 3 -4 years (33.3%). This indicated that head teachers have experience on SNE learners, therefore are at a better position to handle SNE learners in their schools.

4.4 Teachers level of training and influence on performance of special needs learners

The study sought to establish the extent to which teachers' education training level, professional qualifications and training influence the performance of special needs learners. The researcher asked the teachers to indicate their level of education in order to determine if education level of teachers influence on performance of SNE learners in the mainstream. Data was presented in Figure 4.1.



N=83

Figure 4.1: Teachers distribution by level of education

The data on level of education of teachers revealed that, the majority were of O-level as indicated by 74(89.2%). Few teachers were A-level. This indicates that SNE learners are taught mostly by O level teachers than A level. In America, teachers have been trained up to masters and doctoral level to deal with special needs learners as revealed by Tough and Palmer (2003) and Thomas (2008). This is contrary to Kenya whereby most teachers are of O level. The researcher further sought to find out teacher's professional qualifications. The data is presented in Table 4.9.

Table 4.9

Teachers professional qualifications

Professional qualifications	Frequency	Percentage
P1	46	55.4
Diploma	8	9.6
Diploma in SNE	14	16.9
Bachelor of Education in SNE	8	9.6
Bachelor of Education	7	8.5
Total	83	100.0

Table 4.9 revealed that majority of the teachers were P1 indicated by 46(55.4%). A few teachers however were of higher qualifications such as Diploma, Diploma in SNE, Bachelor of Education in SNE and Bachelor of Education. This indicated that the teachers may have been less exposed in training on SNE. This agrees with Mutai 2003 that training of teachers is essential for effective teaching process. The study also sought to find out the opinion of teachers on educational level influencing performance of SNE learners in the mainstream public primary schools. The teachers were to choose per their opinion. Results were as shown in Table 4.10.

Table 4.10

Teacher's opinion on level of education on performance of SNE learners

Responses	Frequency	Percent
Strongly disagree	4	4.8
Disagree	4	4.8
Neutral	8	9.6
Agree	43	51.8
Strongly agree	24	29.0
Total	83	100.0

Table 4.10 indicates that majority of the teachers opinion was that teachers level of education influence performance of special needs learners. This is indicated by 43(51.8%). The other teachers strongly disagreed and disagree while few were neutral. The study implies that most of the teachers opinion was that level of education had an impact on the performance of special needs learners in the mainstream school. Schifler (2001) states that teachers must have sound knowledge. Limited knowledge of teachers may lead to misunderstanding. The researcher further asked teachers to indicate their professional qualification and the influence on performance of special needs learners in the mainstream as indicated in Table 4.11.

Table 4.11

Opinion of teachers on professional qualification on performance of SNE learners

Responses	Frequency	Percentage
Strongly disagree	4	4.8
Disagree	5	6.0
Neutral	6	7.2
Agree	44	53.0
Strongly Agree	24	29.0
Total	83	100.0

The study in Table 4.11 revealed that majority of the teachers 43(53%) had the opinion that teachers professional qualification influence the performance of special needs learners in mainstream public primary schools. This shows that training of teachers has an effect on the performance of SNE learners. The researcher further interviewed the Head teachers and EARC officers and was revealed that majority supported the view that professional qualification had positive value to performance of special needs learners in the mainstream. This is what Kenyan government needed according to GoK (2002). One of the objectives was teachers getting professional qualification through training special needs teachers to gain knowledge which play part in the amount of child's education. The training gives teachers what special education is like.

4.5 Methods teachers use in teaching and their influence on performance of special needs learners

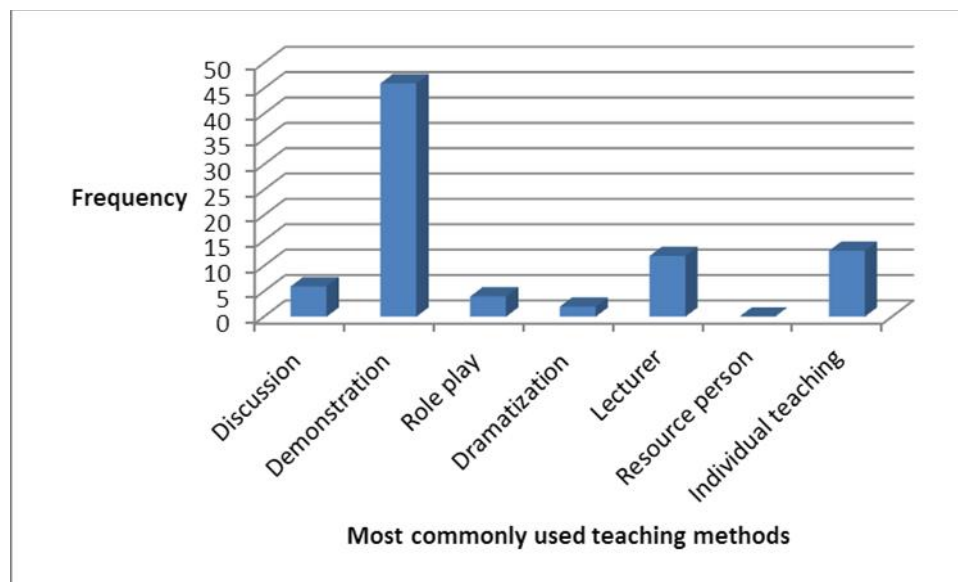
The study sought to find out methods used by teachers in teaching SNE learners in mainstream public primary schools. This included methods teachers' use, commonly used method in teaching, and method that would illicit good response from SNE learners, to find out their influence on performance of special needs learners in the mainstream public primary schools. The teachers were asked to indicate methods that they use in teaching special needs learners in the mainstream. Table 4.12 illustrates the methods used by teachers.

Table 4.12

Methods teachers use and influence on performance of SNE

Method	Response	Frequency	Percent
Demonstration	Yes	49	59.0
	No	34	41.0
	Total	83	100
Discussion	Yes	38	45.8
	No	45	54.2
	Total	83	100
Dramatization	Yes	33	39.8
	No	50	60.2
	Total	83	100
Lecturer	Yes	13	15.7
	No	70	84.3
	Total	83	100
Role play	Yes	38	45.8
	No	45	54.2
	Total	83	100
Resource person	Yes	13	14.5
	No	71	85.5
	Total	83	100

Table 4.12 indicates that demonstration and discussion are the most favored methods 49(59.0%) and 38(45.8%) respectively while role play, dramatization which are mostly task oriented were least favored. This indicates that teachers do not use learner centered methods. May be they are too much involving and yet they are methods that need to be used in teaching SNE learners and can make them excel. Eken (2000) states that teachers in mainstream need to adapt variety of teaching methods for learners to excel. The researcher further asked the teachers to indicate commonly used method in teaching SNE learners. Figure 4.2 indicates these.



N=83

Figure 4.2: Most commonly used teaching methods

Figure 4.2 revealed that majority of the teachers commonly use demonstration method in teaching special needs learners indicated by 46(55.4%). Other methods

such as discussion role play, dramatization were rarely used. This shows that other methods were not utilized properly as teaching methods and could deny learners chances to express themselves. Brown et al 2007 asserts that teaching needs more styles to match learning of learners with special needs who have varied abilities. The researcher sought to find opinion of teachers method that would illicit good responses from SNE learner. Table 4.13 illustrates.

Table 4.13
Opinion of teachers on method that would illicit good responses

Methods	Frequency	Percent
Discussion	10	12.0
Demonstration	8	10.0
Role play	44	53.0
Dramatization	15	18.0
Resource person	6	7.0
Total	83	100.0

Table 4.13 indicates that majority of the teachers selected role play as a method that would illicit good response from SNE learners indicated by 44(53%). Other methods such as resource person were least selected. This indicates that role play which is one of learner centered method if used by teachers to teach SNE learners in the mainstream can arouse interest in the SNE learners and make them improve

in performance. The researcher further interrogated the Head teachers and EARC officers on the same. The response revealed that role play and dramatization are the best methods that can be used on SNE learners. The study is supported by Nganga (2000) who carried out research that revealed that student perform poorly due to poor methods used by instructors where by instructors develop teaching styles based on their own beliefs and personal preferences. This is done in disregard of learners' needs. The researcher interviewed head teachers and EARC officers on appropriate methods for teaching SNE learners. This is indicated in Table 4.14.

Table 4.14
Head teachers and EARC officers responses on methods for teaching SNE in mainstream schools

Method	Head teachers		EARC officers	
	F	%	F	%
Demonstration	4	17.0	0	0
Discussion	5	21.0	0	0
Role play	13	54.0	2	100
Lecturer	2	8.0	0	0
Total	24	100.0	2	100.0

Majority of the head teachers and EARC officers indicated that role play was appropriate method for teaching SNE learners in the mainstreamed indicated by 13(54%) and 2(100%) respectively. A few head teachers were for discussion 7(21%) and lecturer 2(8%). This implies that role play involves the learner and therefore learner centered. The study agrees with Canon and Newble (2000) who defines student centered learning as a way of thinking about teaching and learning that emphasize student responsibility and activity in learning. The researcher sought to find out from SNE learners mainstreamed, the best methods they would prefer teachers to use when teaching. The data is shown in Table 4.15.

Table 4.15
Pupils' preference methods of learning

Responses	F	%
Lecturer method	1	8
Role played	7	58
Discussion	2	17
Demonstration	2	17
Total	12	100

The study in Table 4.15 revealed that most pupils preferred role played 7(58%) discussion and demonstration 2(17%). A few pupils preferred lecturer method which was 1(8%). This implies the pupils enjoy participatory methods of teaching

rather than listening to teachers. Role played and discussion makes learners to participate in the lesson. They are child centered methods of teaching. According to Louis Cohen, Lawrence Manion and Keith Morron (2006), play serves and caters for a fairly wide range of children's needs. This includes psychological education, social emotional and motor.

4.6 Teachers preparation and influence on performance of special needs

learners

The study sought to find out number of teachers teaching in special units number of times teachers' prepare professional records. The researcher also further wanted to find out the extent to which professional records improve teachers' performance and how teachers' preparations influences special needs learners. The study sought to find out number of teachers that teach in special units. This is shown in table 4.16.

Table 4.16

Number of teachers teaching in special units

No. of teachers	Frequency	Percentage
1 teacher	3	57.1
2 teacher	2	28.7
3 teacher	2	14.2
Total	7	100.0

Table 4.16 revealed that majority SNE teachers teach in special units indicated by 3 (57.1%) and a few also assist in the mainstream. The special needs teachers are the key resources teachers in mainstream classes. They play advisory roles to other teachers in teaching SNE learners. This is so due to the government policy of employing teachers. This indicates that the SNE teachers are the majority to advise the regular teachers on how to prepare and teach special needs learners. This is in line with Yssel dyke and Algozzne (1976) who states that special education teachers are typical responsible for meeting the specific educational needs of these students. The researcher sought to find out number of times teachers prepare lesson plans to teach special needs learners in the mainstream. This is shown in Table 4.17.

Table 4.17

Number of times teachers prepare lesson plan

Responses	Frequency	Percent
3 times per week	56	67.0
5 times per week	9	11.0
10 times per week	9	11.0
15 times per week	1	1.0
Above 15 times per week	8	10.0
Total	83	100.0

From Table 4.17, majority of the teachers prepare 3 times per week indicated by 56 (67.0%). This revealed that most teachers do not prepare lesson plan as required in teaching profession. Preparations are essential to a teacher because they guide and prepare teachers before the actual teaching takes place. Teachers need to prepare taking into account the SNE learners in the mainstream and hence may improve in their performance. Further, the researcher asked the teachers if they prepared professional records. Table 4.18 displays the findings.

Table 4.18

Teachers preparation of professional records

Preparation of	Responses	Frequency	Percent	
Professional records				
	Schemes of work	Yes	65	78.9
		No	18	21.1
	Total	83	100	
Lesson plans	Yes	46	53.9	
	No	37	46.1	
	Total	83	100	
Teaching aids	Yes	14	15.8	
	No	69	84.2	
	Total	83	100	

The study in Table 4.18 indicated that majority of the teachers' scheme for every subject they teach indicated by 65(78.9%). Some teachers prepare lesson plan and most of them do not prepare teaching aid. This showed that teachers scheme as a matter of policy and lack to prepare lesson plans and teaching aids. Lesson planning and scheming for SNE learners is important because teachers prepare in advance on how they can teach. The teaching aids on the other hand will enable teachers to handle their lessons with ease. This concurs with Ayot (2000) who indicates that successful of a good lesson depends on how well teachers prepares lessons, what type of equipment are used and the use of teaching aids. The researcher also sought to find out the extent to which professional records and teachers' professionalism enhances teaching, learning and performance of SNE learners. Table 4.19 shows this.

Table 4.19

Professional records improve teachers performance

Responses	Frequency	Percent
Large extent	53	63.9
Moderate	29	34.9
Not available	1	1.2
Total	83	100.0

The study revealed that professional records and teachers professionalism can improve teachers' performance by large extent 53(63.9%). This is one of the teachers' characteristics that may improve participation in class and may lead learners to good performance.

4.7 Teachers perception and influence on performance of special needs learners

The study sought to investigate the extent to which teachers perception influence performance of special needs learners in the mainstream schools. This included teachers training on perception of SNE learners, special needs learners can excel academically if perceived positively, parent; support to teachers on perception of SNE learners. Teachers' perception on SNE attendance to vocational courses, teachers perception on SNE learners left to SNE teachers, learners opinion on how they are perceived by teachers and head teachers response to how teachers perceive SNE learners. The researcher asked the teachers to indicate if they have ever attended special needs in-service course. Figure 4.3 illustrates this.

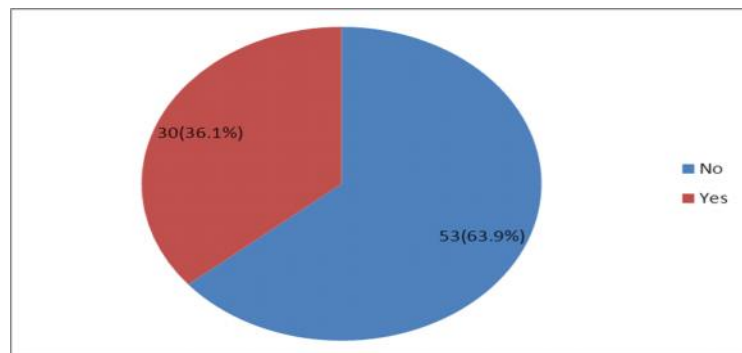


Figure 4.3: Teachers training on perception of SNE learners

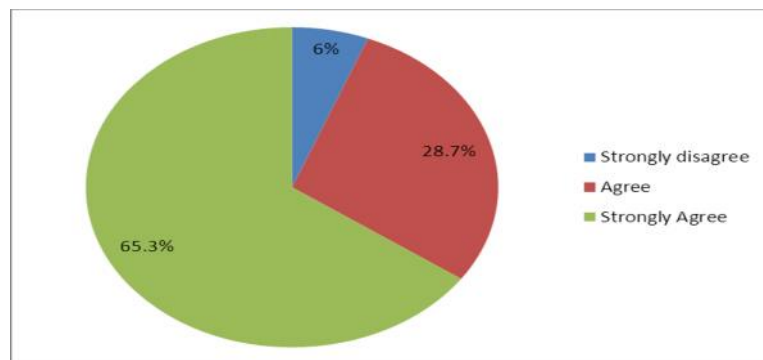
From Figure 4.3, the study revealed that majority of the teachers had not attended inservice course on special needs education indicated by 53(63.9%). This revealed that majority of the teachers who are regular teachers have not attended in-service course on SNE. Few indicated by 30(36.1%) were SNE teachers. This indicates that SNE learners are handled with teachers who have little ideas about them. According to the Ali et al (2006) insufficient number of trained teachers has an effect on teacher – learner ratio in the mainstream. It is vital for teachers to train and gain knowledge for successful and achievement to mainstream learners. The researcher asked the teachers to indicate if special needs learners can excel in their academics if perceived positively. Table 4.20 indicates this.

Table 4.20

Special needs learners can excel academically if perceived positively

Responses	Frequency	Percent
Strongly disagree	5	6.0
Disagree	1	1.3
Neutral	3	3.6
Agree	45	54.2
Strongly agree	29	34.9
Total	83	100.0

From the study, majority of the teachers agreed that SNE learners can excel indicated by 45 (54.2). Only few teachers indicated that they cannot. The study implies that if SNE learners are catered for properly in the mainstream classes, they can excel. According to code of practice (2001) local authorities and school based policies, states that SNE pupils have to reach to their full potentials both academically and socially. The researcher further sought to find out from teachers if parents of SNE learners support them in teaching of their children. This is shown in Figure 4.4.



N=83

Figure 4.4: Parent support to teachers on perception of SNE learners

Figure 4.4 revealed that majority of the teachers agreed that they receive support from parents of SNE learners. This is shown by 55(65.3%). This study indicated that parents of SN learners give support and therefore can help in the performance of the SNE learners if teachers can liaise with them about their children. These concurs with Philip Garner (2009) who established that parents partnership throughout England are evidence of current level recognition that SNE are best

tackled by dialogue with and support from the home. The researcher sought to find out if learners can attend vocational courses. Table 4.21 shows this.

Table 4.21

Teachers perception on SNE attendance to vocational courses

Responses	Frequency	Percent
Strongly agree	6	7.3
Disagree	12	14.5
Neutral	9	10.8
Agree	28	33.7
Strongly agree	28	33.7
Total	83	100.0

Table 4.21 indicated that majority of the teachers agreed and strongly agrees that SNE learners can attend vocational courses. This is indicated by 28(37.7%) respectively. The study revealed that more teachers were in agreement that special needs learners need to attend vocational courses. This is in accordance with Robert Gaylard (1990) who did a research on SNE learners. The research revealed that the field of vocational special education addresses the need to prepare students with disabilities for world of works and there is a transition movement that has begun to attempt to move disabled student learning school to successful

employment. The researcher further sought to find out if special needs learners should be left to SNE teachers only. Table 4.22 illustrates this.

Table 4.22

Teachers perception on SNE learners to be left to SNE teachers

Responses	Frequency	Percent
Strongly disagree	17	20.5
Disagree	48	57.8
Neutral	9	10.8
Agree	3	3.6
Strongly agree	6	7.3
Total	83	100.0

Table 4.22 indicates that the majority of the teachers disagreed that special needs learners should not be left to special needs teachers. This is indicated by 48(57.8%). This revealed that other teachers should be involved in teaching the special needs learners. In this case, agreeing mainstreaming where learners are taught with regular teachers. Head teachers were also interviewed on the same. The study revealed that most head teachers were of the view that SNE learners be left to SNE teachers because regular teachers do not support the SNE learners fully. According to MOEST (2004), there is needed to enhance mobilization and awareness of the programme to eradicate taboos and beliefs associated with

disabilities. There is need to create awareness to teachers and pupils to take those with disabilities as normal human beings. Majority of the responses were of the view that regular teachers should be inserviced regularly so that they have a positive perception to special needs learners mainstreamed. The researcher sought to find out from SNE pupils in mainstream on how teachers perceive them.

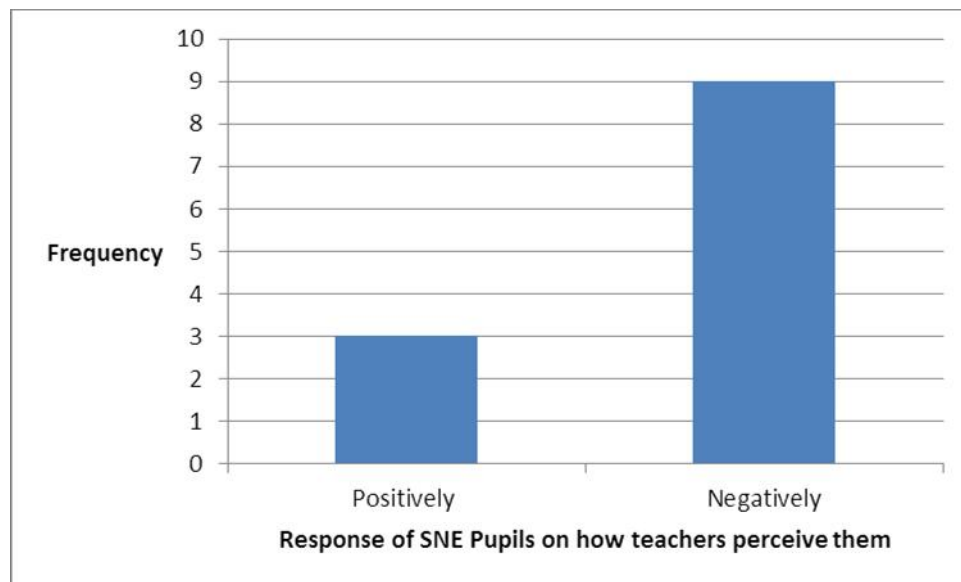
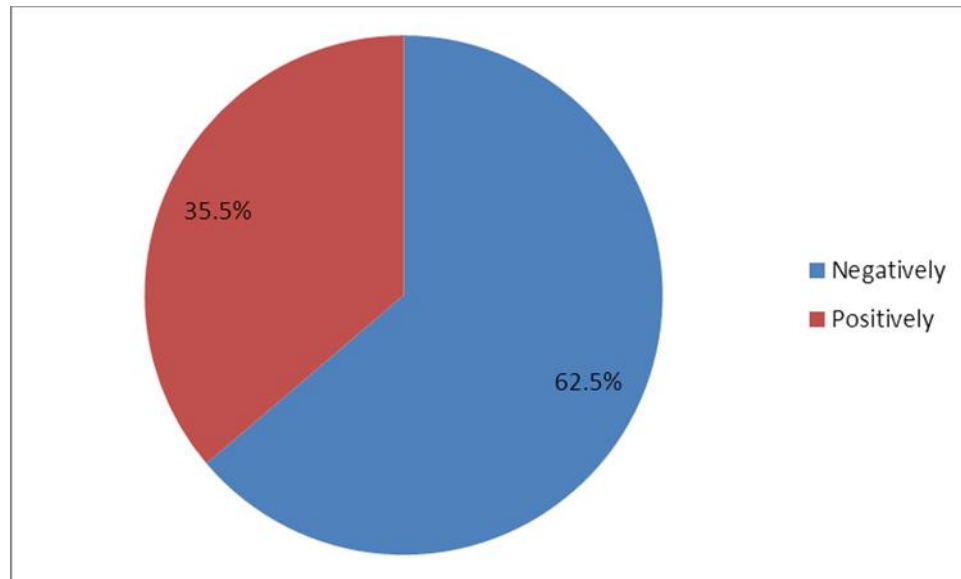


Figure 4.5: Response of SNE pupils on how teachers perceive them

Figure 4.5 revealed that majority of the pupils felt that were viewed negatively by teachers 9(75%). This implies that teachers have negative perception towards SNE learners mainstreamed. This may be because of traditions and beliefs. UNESCO (2008) indicates that teachers need to change from traditions that make them lock out the children with disabilities and deny them right to education.

The researcher interviewed head teachers on teachers' perception on SNE learners in mainstream. Figure 4.6 indicates this.



N=24

Figure 4.6: Head teachers' response to how teachers perceive SNE learners

Figure 4.6 revealed that the majority of the head teacher's viewed that the teachers had negative perception on SNE learners 62.5% and some viewed teachers as being positive to SNE learners (35.5%). This implies that teachers have negative perception which may cause an impact on SNE learning. This concurs with Singal (2006) who concluded that many teachers believe that children who need academic moderation would be unable to cope with level of academic demands in the mainstream schooling system and they argue that such children should be taught in separate system or segregated.

4.8 Relationship between teachers' characteristics and performance of special needs learners

In order to establish relationship of teachers characteristic variables (independent) and performance of special needs variables (dependent), Pearson product of moment correlation was used. Table 4.23 indicates this.

Table 4.23
Pearson correlation

		Performance of Special Needs Learners	Teachers' Level of Training	Teaching Methods Used by Teachers	Teachers' Preparation	Teachers' Perception
Performance of Special Needs Learners	Pearson Correlation	1	-.014	.014	.053	-.088
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.914	.913	.687	.631
	N	83	83	83	83	83
Teachers' Level of Training	Pearson Correlation	-.014	1	.287	-.263	.108
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.914		.026	.043	.155
	N	83	83	83	83	83
Teaching Methods Used by Teachers	Pearson Correlation	.014	.287	1	.097	.057
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.913	.026		.461	.757
	N	83	83	83	83	83
Teachers' Preparation	Pearson Correlation	.053	-.263	.097	1	.333
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.687	.043	.461		.062
	N	83	83	83	83	83
Teachers' Perception	Pearson Correlation	-.088	.108	.057	.333	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.631	.155	.757	.062	
	N	83	83	83	83	83

The correlation between teachers' characteristics and performance of special needs learners in mainstream public primary schools was found to be statistically weak where the Pearson product moment correlation has shown positive value on the teachers. These results showed a weak correlation between teachers' characteristics and performance of special needs learners. For example, the correlation between teaching methods and performance of special needs learners ($r = 0.014$), and the correlation between teachers' preparation and performance of special needs learners ($r = 0.053$) were positive but significantly very weak. Similarly, a notable number of the Pearson product moment correlations also had negative values. The correlation between teachers' level of training and performance of special needs learners ($r = -.014$), and the correlation between teachers' perception and performance of special needs learners ($r = -.088$) were negative hence not statistically significant.

The negative correlation found between teachers' characteristics and performance of special needs learners in mainstream public primary schools can be attributed to teachers not using learner centered methods and teachers not preparing professional records such as lesson plans and teaching aids. Other reasons for the negative correlation between teachers' characteristics and performance of special needs learners in mainstream public primary schools are low level of training especially for the inservice course on special needs education among the teachers and negative perception on SNE learners.

CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 Introduction

This chapter outlines summary, conclusions, recommendations of the study and suggestions for further research.

5.2 Summary of the study

The study sought to investigate teacher characteristics influencing performance of special needs learners in the mainstream public primary schools in Kakamega East Sub-County in Kenya. The target population constituted 342 respondents who were 252 mainstream teachers, 24 special needs teachers, 24 head teachers, 40 mainstream SNE pupils and 2 EAR officers. Sample size comprised of 76 regular teachers, 7 special needs teachers, 12 mainstream SNE pupils, 24 head teachers and 2 EARC officers making a total of 121 respondents. Questionnaires and interview schedules were research instruments used to collect data. The research study used descriptive survey design. To determine validity, pilot schools were used. Reliability of the instrument was done using Pearson Product of moment coefficient. Data was analyzed qualitatively and quantitatively and presented in frequencies and percentages.

The main finding of the study was that regular teachers have not been trained to handle SNE learners in the mainstream and have neither attended in-service

course therefore they do not use methods that can improve the learning of SNE learners. The regular teachers since they lack training, prepare mostly for normal learners and do not consider SNE learners. This is extended to the way, they perceive SNE learners. The teachers perceive them negatively. The finding of the study showed that all sectors under the study should fully implement inclusive education where mainstreaming falls.

5.3 Conclusions

The study concludes that teachers' characteristics influence performance of special needs learners. Some of the weaknesses include training of teachers in SNE, inadequate teaching methods, being unprepared when attending to the learners in class and lack of positive perception towards the learners. However, all these attributes can be addressed through appropriate mechanism and structures which can have special attention in terms of training of teachers in SNE, use of teaching methods that SNE learners can adapt content easily and to have positive perception towards the learners.

5.4 Recommendation of the study

- (i) The study revealed that majority of the teachers had not been in serviced on SNE hence impacting negatively on special needs learners in the mainstream. Kenya Institute of Special Education (KISE) should consider training of regular teachers and more of the SNE teachers. This will

improve teacher's participation in mainstreamed school and hence performance of SNE learners.

(ii) To enhance positive perception and performance of SNE learners, the sub-county education board should organize regular workshops to sensitize teachers on how to practice perception strategies in classroom. During the workshops, an open forum should be encouraged to enable participants share their experiences and come up with solutions to these problems.

(iii) There is need to involve teachers at all levels when planning for SNE learners. This is because from research findings, it is indicated that majority of the teachers do not prepare professional records that cater for SNE learners.

5.5 Suggestions for further study

In line with the findings, conclusions and recommendations made in this study, the following areas are hereby suggested:

(i) Further research should be conducted on the influence of teachers discipline on the performance of SNE pupils in mainstream public primary schools in Kakamega East Sub-County. This is because this study focused on teacher characteristics. Other studies should be conducted on hours spent on teaching and absenteeism of teachers.

- (ii) A similar study may be undertaken using comparative analysis among both public and private schools in Kakamega East Sub-County and results compared with those of this study. This would generate wider knowledge about teacher characteristics on the academic performance of SNE learners in mainstream public primary schools.

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APPENDICES

APPENDIX I: LETTER OF TRANSMITTAL

Jumba Florence Bunoro
University of Nairobi
P.O Box 92
Kikuyu

To the District Education Officer
Kakamega East Sub County
P.O Box 31 – 50107
Kakamega

Dear Sir/Madam,

RE: REQUEST TO CARRY OUT RESEARCH IN YOUR AREA

I am a student at the University of Nairobi taking a Master degree in Education. I am required to carry out research as part of my course. I intend to carry out a research on the teacher characteristics influencing performance of special needs learners in the mainstream public primary schools, Kakamega East Sub - County Kenya. The purpose of this letter is to seek your permission to collect data in your sub county. I have attached a copy of the questionnaire that will be used in the research.

Thanks in advance for your co-operation.

Yours faithfully,

Jumba Florence Bunoro

Jumba Florence Bunoro
University of Nairobi
P.O Box 92
Kikuyu

The Head teacher,
.....Primary School
Kakamega

Dear Sir/Madam:

RE: REQUEST TO CARRY OUT RESEARCH IN YOUR SCHOOL

I am a student at the University of Nairobi taking a Masters degree in Education. I am required to carry out research as part of my course. I intend to carry out a research on the teacher characteristics influencing performance of special needs learners in the public primary schools, Kakamega East Sub - County Kenya. The purpose of this letter is to seek your permission to collect data in your school. I have attached a copy of the questionnaire that will be used in the research.

Thanks in advance for co-operation.

Yours faithfully,

Jumba Florence Bunoro

**APPENDIX II: QUESTIONNAIRE FOR TEACHERS IN MAINSTREAM
AND SNE**

This study is intended to investigate teachers' factors influencing SN learners in the mainstream in Kakamega East Sub County. The questionnaire is designed to seek your opinion views. The questionnaire has four parts. Please complete each part. Information will be treated with confidentiality and will be used by researcher for the purpose of academic hence does not write your name.

Questionnaire: For the following set of questions indicate your opinion by () in the brackets provided:

Part A: Teachers' demographic information

1. What is your gender?

Male () Female ()

2. What is your age?

20 – 30yrs () 31 – 40yrs () 41 -50yrs () Above 50yrs ()

3. What is your working experience as a teacher?

Less than 2yrs () 3 – 5yrs () Over 6 Yrs ()

Part B: Teachers level of training and influence on performance of special needs learners

1. What is your highest level of your academic qualifications?

O-level () A-Level () University ()

2. (a) Kindly indicate your professional qualification

P1 ()

Diploma in Education ()

Certificate in Special Need ()

Diploma in Special education ()

Bachelors of Education (Special) ()

Bachelor of Education ()

(b) Indicate any other qualification

.....

In this section you are required to choose from the terms provided. Please tick the appropriate number as per your opinion;

1. Strongly Disagree 2. Disagree 3. Neutral 4. Agree 5. Strongly Agree

3. Teachers' academic qualification influence performance of special needs learners in the mainstream public primary schools.

1. Strongly Disagree 2. Disagree 3. Neutral

4. Agree 5. Strongly Agree

4. Teachers' professional qualification influence performance of special needs learners in the mainstream public primary schools.

1. Strongly Disagree 2. Disagree 3. Neutral 4. Agree

5. Strongly Agree

5. In your own opinion explain what should be done on teachers' professional qualification that can make special needs learners in the mainstream public primary schools perform better

.....
.....

Part C: Teaching methods used by teachers and their influence in performance of special needs learners in the mainstream public primary schools.

1. Identify the teaching methods used in teaching of special needs learners in the mainstream public primary schools.

Discussion () Demonstration () Role Play () Dramatization ()
Lecture () Resource person () Individual Teaching ()

2. Select the most common method used.....
3. Give your reason for 2 above.....

.....
.....

4. (a) which method would elicit good responses and influence performance

.....
(b) Explain.....

.....
.....

Part D: Teachers' preparedness in teaching special need learners in the mainstream public primary schools

1. How many teachers teach in special units in your school?
1 () 2 () 3 () 4 () above 5 ()
2. (a) Do the teachers regularly prepare for teaching mainstreamed learners?
Yes () No ()
3. (b) If yes, how often?
 - (i) 3 times per week
 - (ii) 5 times per week
 - (iii) 10 times per week
 - (iv) 15 times per week
 - (v) Above 15 times per week
4. Do you scheme for every subject you teach in mainstreamed classes?
Yes () No ()
5. (a) Do you lesson plan for every lesson you teach in mainstreamed classes?
Yes () No ()
(b) If NO, How regular do you lesson plan?
.....
6. Do you prepare teaching Aids for your lesson in mainstreamed classes?
Yes () No ()
7. Does lesson preparation influence on content delivery?
Yes () No ()

In this section you are required to choose from the terms provided one that captures your opinion as closely as possible, please circle the appropriate number as per your opinion;

1. Strongly Disagree 2. Disagree 3. Neutral 4. Agree 5. Strongly Agree

1. Special need learners can learn and excel

Strongly Disagree 2. Disagree 3. Neutral 4. Agree 5. Strongly Agree

2. A school should encourage parents support their special need learners

Strongly Disagree 2. Disagree 3. Neutral 4. Agree 5. Strongly Agree

3. Special need learners mainstreamed ought to enroll in vocational training and not a KCPE class

Strongly Disagree 2. Disagree 3. Neutral 4. Agree 5. Strongly Agree

4. All SNE learners should be only left to SNE teachers

Strongly Disagree 2. Disagree 3. Neutral 4. Agree 5. Strongly Agree

APPENDIX III: QUESTIONNAIRE FOR MAINSTREAMED PUPILS

The study is intended to investigate teachers' characteristics influencing performance of SN learners in mainstream public primary schools in Kakamega East Sub-county. Please fill in the information as indicated.

1. What is your gender?
Boys ()
Girls ()
2. Indicate your age bracket.
8 – 10 years ()
10 – 12 years ()
12 – 14 years ()
14 – 16 years ()
16 – 18 years ()
3. Which method do you prefer teachers to use when teaching?
Lecturer? ()
Role played ()
Discussion ()
Demonstration ()
4. How do teachers perceive you?
Positively ()
Negatively ()

**APPENDIX IV: INTERVIEW GUIDE FOR HEAD TEACHERS AND
EARC OFFICERS**

The purpose of the interview guide is to establish school teachers' characteristics influencing performance of SN learners in mainstream public primary schools in Kakamega East Sub County. Openness, objectivity and accuracy in answering the questions will be greatly appreciated.

1. What is your gender?
2. What is your age bracket?
3. For how long have you been working in this status?
4. Are regular teachers friendly when teaching SN learners?
5. What impact does training level of teachers has on SN learners in the mainstream?
6. In your opinion which methods are appropriate for teaching SN learners?
7. Do teachers' perception influence SN learners in the mainstream in schools? Answer yes or no if no explain.

APPENDIX V: LETTER OF AUTHORIZATION (NACOSTI)



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. **NACOSTI/P/16/14714/8994**

Date:

4th April, 2016

Florence Bunoro Jumba
University of Nairobi
P.O. Box 30197-00100
NAIROBI.

RE: RESEARCH AUTHORIZATION

Following your application for authority to carry out research on "*Teacher characteristics influencing performance of special needs learners in the mainstream public primary schools, Kakamega East Sub - County Kenya,*" I am pleased to inform you that you have been authorized to undertake research in **Kakamega County** for a period ending **1st April, 2017.**

You are advised to report to **the County Commissioner and the County Director of Education, Kakamega 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.


BONIFACE WANYAMA
FOR: DIRECTOR-GENERAL/CEO

Copy to:

The County Commissioner
Kakamega County.


The County Director of Education
Kakamega County.



APPENDIX VI: RESEARCH PERMIT

THIS IS TO CERTIFY THAT:
MS. FLORENCE BUNORO JUMBA
of **UNIVERSITY OF NAIROBI, 0-50107**
SHINYALU, has been permitted to
conduct research in Kakamega County
on the topic: **TEACHER**
CHARACTERISTICS INFLUENCING
PERFORMANCE OF SPECIAL NEEDS
LEARNERS IN THE MAINSTREAM PUBLIC
PRIMARY SCHOOLS, KAKAMEGA EAST
SUB-COUNTY KENYA
for the period ending:
1st April, 2017

Permit No : **NACOSTI/P/16/14714/8994**
Date Of Issue : **4th April, 2016**
Fee Received : **ksh 1000**



.....
Applicant's
Signature

.....
Director General
National Commission for Science,
Technology & Innovation