

RESEARCH ARTICLE

Perspectives on Psychosocial Challenges Facing Integrated Learners with Physical Disabilities (LWPD) in Selected Kenyan Mainstream Secondary Schools

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Abstract

The study investigated the perspectives on psychosocial challenges facing integrated learners with physical disabilities (LWPD) in the selected mainstream secondary schools in Olkalou District in Nyandarua County, Kenya. The study was informed by the Chickering Psychosocial Development Theory. The study adopted a Mixed Methods design. The study participants comprised teachers and integrated LWPD learners in secondary schools. The sample size comprised 48 students integrated in the selected secondary schools from Olkalou rehabilitation centre in the previous four years and 60 teachers. Questionnaires and interviews were used to collect data. The results indicated that learners with physical disabilities in integrated schools suffer low self-esteem, and they also found it very hard to fit into the world of non-disabled learners. The study recommended a comprehensive implementation of inclusive education policy and proper guidelines integration of special needs learners in Kenyan mainstream schools.

Keywords: *Perspectives, Psychosocial, Challenges, Integrated, Learners with Physical Disabilities (LWPD), Mainstream, Secondary schools.*

Introduction

People with disabilities (PWD) make up 10% of the total population of Kenya, approximately 3.5 million people (WHO, 2006). According Kenya National Survey for Persons with Disabilities (2008), the prevalence of disability in Kenya is 4.6%. Out of this 1.6% have physical disabilities. 67% of PWDs attain a primary level of education and only a small proportion attains secondary level (19%). Very few reach university (2%). 7% of PWDs are denied enrolment in school because of their disability. 6% of PWDs drop out of school because of their disabilities, 9% because of illness and 9% because of lack of interest. Physical impairment is highest in central 39% [1]. Education plays an important role in addressing the issues that impede the education of children with special needs in Kenya. Significant gains have been realized in the provision of education to children with special needs over the past six years, for example, there has been increased funding to Special Needs Education, (SNE) and support to teacher training for SNE at KISE [2]. According to the Kenyan Constitution promulgated on 27th August 2010, persons with disabilities are entitled to enjoy all the rights and fundamental freedom set out in the Bill of Rights. They have the right to access education, institutions and facilities for persons with

disabilities that are as integrated into society as a whole as is compatible with the interests of those persons.

After Kenya's independence in 1963, the policy for the disabled persons changed with the establishment of rehabilitation training programs and the focus was on training prevention and rehabilitation of the disabled, where emphasis was placed on the rights of the disabled to become full-fledged members in the society and to remove the barriers to participation. This ushered in a new phase of integration and inclusion based on equality and education for all, [3]. The present education policy for integration of the disabled children is the result of development in disability over the last 40 years [2]. Integration is the normalization of where people with disabilities live; with whom they work and play and it is a way of eliminating segregation of physically handicapped learners from the rest of the people in the society, which had been created by special education [4]. This involves trying to make the lives of persons with disabilities much like the lives of non-disabled persons as possible and also dropping the labels used to describe disability and emphasizes the civil rights of disabled people (Kenya Commission of Human Rights, 2000).

Much of zeal for the practice of integration is a blanket-policy system from the anticipated effects in the social-emotional domain, where physically handicapped children, accepted because of contact and familiarity, will naturally model the appropriate behaviors of peers; will not suffer the stigma of special classes and will be provided a more real life environment of learning [5]. Integration program is aimed at removing existing barriers that make them become anti-social members of the society [6]. In addition, the government continues to train primary school teachers in special education at Kenya Institute of Special Education (KISE) as well as in tertiary and university level in order to improve the national capacity of teachers of special education in regular schools. The substantive significance of integration is that the learner will get opportunity to model other physically handicapped learners who have adjusted despite the same obstacle of disability [7].

The study was informed by the Social Theory of disability and Chickering Psychosocial Development theory. The Social theory of disability is an approach to disability that sees the problems disabled people face as a result of society's barriers rather than the person's medical conditions. It recognizes the solution as to rid off the barriers created by the society, rather than relying on curing all people who have impairments, which in most cases is not possible [4]. The theory argues that because people with impairments are viewed as unfortunate, useless, different, oppressed and sick, they posed direct challenge to the commonly held western values. This is so because they are unable to enjoy material and social benefits of modern society, to contribute to the economic good of the community and they are perceived as abnormal and different [4].

The Chickering psychosocial development theory argues that, it is essential for students to go through seven vectors of development in order to establish a self-identity [8]. This includes (1) developing competence; (2) managing emotions; (3) moving through autonomy toward interdependence; (4) developing mature interpersonal relationships; (5) establishing identity; (6) developing purpose; (7) and developing integrity, [4]. In an influential model of student departure [9], for students to successfully matriculate in school/ college, they must first leave their family, friends, and community fully behind in order to interact with the new institutional setting. Tinto posits that students are more likely to remain enrolled in an

institution if they become connected to the social and academic life of that institution. Students who become integrated into an institution by developing connections to individuals, participating in clubs, or engaging in academic activities, are more likely to persist than those who remain on the periphery. Preventing this integration process may be incongruence, or a lack of institutional fit. Therefore, students who do not feel at home in an institution or do not believe that an institution can help them meet their goals are unlikely to persist, and such isolated students are less likely to persist in the institution. In Tinto's student interactional model, both academic and social integration are essential for student persistence at four-year residential in schools/colleges.

Previous studies on challenges facing integrated learners with disabilities have been documented. For example, isolation impacts negatively on the learner's self-concept as well as social interaction in the society [10] learners with physical disabilities integrated into mainstream schools resist integration, drop out or regress in performance [11] and that such learners are discriminated against when in mainstream schools [4]. Konza reiterates that [3] challenges facing integration of LWPD include inadequate teacher training, large class sizes, insufficient resources and low teacher efficacy. Mutisya [11], observes that learners with physical disabilities resist integration into mainstream schools due to various reasons; lack of proper facilities to cater for their impairment, long distances to and from school, segregation by the peers, lack of psychological preparation, negative attitude from teachers\parents\ schoolmates. Therefore, discrimination and isolation impede education [12]. Moreover, [1] found out that in spite of LWPD being included in regular education, they prefer being in special education because they felt safe and valued. Another study by [4] on challenges facing integration into mainstream schools in Iowa country, North America, found that, children in educational mainstreaming programs can be at heightened risk for rejection by their peers even with the strong support of the school administration. In addition, children with behavior disorders are at greatest risk for rejection in both mainstreaming and ordinary classroom situations.

Ndinda [4] studied on the root causes of marginalization of the physically disabled learners in selected mainstream schools in Machakos District in Eastern Province of Kenya. The study found out that the physically

challenged learners lacked counselling, health care, adequate facilities among others. This greatly affected their self-esteem, ambitions, goals and self-motivation. Similarly, Sitienei [10] studied the effects of integration on self-concept of physically handicapped learners in primary schools Eldoret municipality, Kenya. The study found out that integration has positive effects on the self-concept of physically handicapped children in primary schools. Keitany [13] study found out that, head teachers viewed inclusive education as a good idea, but, majority of the teachers were of the view that the training they got did not prepare them adequately to meet the educational needs of learners with disabilities. Another study was carried out in Israel by Schreuer [14] on socio-cultural factors affecting inclusion of students with disabilities in higher education institutes in Israel. The findings were that achievements of students with disabilities proved only slightly below those of students without disabilities. Muigai [12] study found out that discrimination and isolation impede education of girls with physical disabilities; lack of conducive school environment and structures discourage girls with physical disabilities from continuing schooling.

The above reviewed studies have left a gap in their study in that they didn't focus on psychosocial challenges facing integrated learners in mainstream schools, and secondly they failed to sample learners with physical disabilities. While certain studies reviewed investigated the variable of self-concept on integration, the current study focused on psychosocial challenges facing integrated learners with physical disabilities. Moreover, the current study adopted both purposive and simple random sampling techniques unlike the above reviewed study which used random sampling only. In addition, most of the reported studies adopted either quantitative or qualitative approaches, but the current study adopted a mixed research design which produced comprehensive data on the phenomenon being investigated.

Goals of the Study

The study investigated the perspectives on psychosocial challenges facing integrated Learners with Physical Disabilities (LWPD) in selected Kenyan mainstream secondary schools

The research study was also guided by the following research questions:

What are the psychological challenges facing integrated learners with physical disabilities (LWPD) in the selected mainstream secondary

schools in Olkalou District in Nyandarua County, Kenya?

What are the sociological factors affecting integrated LWPD in the selected mainstream secondary schools in Olkalou District in Nyandarua County, Kenya?

Participants and Setting

The study was carried out in Olkalou District in Nyandarua County, Kenya. A total of 48 students integrated in the selected secondary schools from Olkalou rehabilitation centre in the previous four years and 60 teachers in mainstream secondary schools participated in the study. Simple random sampling method was used to sample the class teachers while learners were sampled using the purposive sampling technique.

Research Instruments

Both questionnaires and interviews were used to collect data on psychological challenges facing integrated LWPD in the selected mainstream secondary schools.

Questionnaires

Questionnaires were administered to teachers and also learners with physical disabilities in the selected secondary schools. The questionnaires sought information on five aspects including the demographic information, psychological and sociological challenges, learning challenges and teacher related factors that challenge integration of LWPD. The information solicited helped the researcher to identify factors that pose as challenges to LWPD. The items in the questionnaire had close-ended type of questions. The responses of the close-ended questions were in five option Likert scale where, the learners ticked their preferred choices, with the options, Strongly Agree (SA), Agree (A), Undecided (U), Disagree (D) and Strongly Disagree (SD).

Interview Guides

According to Cohen, et al [15], the interview guide is a flexible tool for data collection, enabling multisensory channels to be used; verbal, non-verbal, spoken and heard. Interview guide was administered to teacher-counsellors who were purposively sampled. It aimed at probing deeper into their experiences with LWPD in their institutions. The interview guide sought demographic information, information about the challenges facing the integrated learners as viewed by the teacher counsellor and the learning barriers they face in their schools. The teachers were interviewed on information on challenges

faced by LWPD in the dormitories and their relationship with peers.

The validity of the questionnaires was ascertained through a pilot study which was done in a school with similar characteristics with the population. Source triangulation was used to validate the instruments by making teachers and learners to respond to some similar questions as well as method triangulation. It entails use of questionnaires and interview guides to collect similar information. The rationale behind using method triangulation was to ensure validity of the data. Reliability of questionnaires was ensured by using the used split half method. This involved splitting the items in the questionnaires into two halves (odd and even numbers). The odd numbers, set A, were administered separately and scored accordingly and the even numbers, set B, was done the same. The scores of the two tests were then computed by Pearson's Product moment coefficient and found to be 0.615. This was to determine an estimate of reliability coefficient of the whole questionnaire. Spearman Brown prophecy formula recommends that a reliability coefficient of 0.6 and above is a good measure of reliability [16].

Procedure

Ethical consideration to conduct the study was first obtained from the Catholic University of Eastern Africa. Thereafter, the researchers obtained a research permit from the Ministry of Education to collect data from the selected schools. There after the researcher visited the Education office in Nyandarua County and submitted copies of the research permit to the County Director of Education and the District Education Officer in order to obtain permission to conduct the research in the selected schools. After meeting the principals, copies of permit were given and permission sought to collect data from their institutions. The researcher booked the days for conducting the interviews, administering the questionnaires in the various schools. Each school had a different day but the time allocation was in the afternoon. On the material day the researcher administered the research instruments to participants; questionnaires to the teachers and students and interviews to teachers. The researcher ensured that the purpose of this study was fully and clearly explained in advance to the participants before conducting the exercise. Informed consent was obtained from the respondents after the explanation. The participants were free to participate in the present study. Confidentiality was observed by

ensuring anonymity of both the students and the schools. Anonymity of the identity of the respondents was safeguarded by use of numbers.

Data Analysis

Quantitative data was analyzed by using the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS), version 19.0. The percentage of subjects who respond to questionnaires is adequate if it is 50%, good at 60% and very good at 70%. Quantitative data was summarized using descriptive statistics including frequencies, means, percentages, and inferential statistics.

Qualitative data obtained from the interviews conducted to the teacher counsellors was analyzed using the thematic framework. This involved systematic searching, arranging, organizing, breaking the data units, synthesizing, searching the patterns and discovering what is to be learnt as brought out by the respondents. The researcher then categorized data into themes according to research objectives and used thematic analysis through discussions and presented in form of narratives, interview transcripts as shared by the participants. The results were organized into themes around psychological and sociological challenges facing integrated LWPD in selected mainstream secondary schools.

Results and Discussion

The final student participants were 48, 5 teacher-counsellors and 18 teachers. The total number of the actual study participants was 71 out of the 72 earlier anticipated by the researcher which gave 98.7% of the return rate.

The Table 1 presents the demographic information of teacher participants. From the information in the Table 1, 55% of participants (n = 11) were male teachers while 45% (n = 9) were female teachers. 55% of the teachers were graduates, 25% were diploma holders while 20% were special trained teachers. The information also indicates that 80% of the respondents were class tutors. In addition, 45% of teacher participants had 11-20 years teaching experience, 30% had 5-10 years of teaching experience while 25% had the lowest teaching experience of between above 20 years.

Table 2 presents the demographic information of the learner participants. Based on the majority of respondents ranged from age above 16years, (50%) followed by 14 to 16 years, (41.7%) whilst those between 12 and 14 years were 8.3%. moreover, there were 12 form ones (25%), 5 form twos (10.4%), 16 form threes (33.3%) and 15 form fours (33.1%).

Table 1: Demographic information of teacher-participants

Variable	Frequency	Percentage
Gender		
Male	11	55.0
Female	9	45.0
Level of Education		
Graduate	11	55.0
Diploma	5	25.0
Special Trained Teacher	4	20.0
Role		
Class Teacher	18	90.0
Teacher counselor	2	10.0
Teaching experience		
5 – 10 Years	6	30.0
11 – 20 Years	9	45.0
Above 20 years	5	25.0

Table 2: Demographic Information of Learner participants

Demographic data	Frequency	Percentage
Gender		
Male	24	50
Female	24	50
Age		
12-14years	4	8.3
14-16 years	20	41.7
Above 16 years	24	50.0
Class		
Form 1	12	25.0
Form 2	5	10.4
Form 3	16	33.3
Form 4	15	31.3

Table 3. Quantitative results on Psychological challenges facing LWPDP (n=48)

Factor/ Variable	Agree		Uncertain		Disagree	
	F	%	F	%	F	%
I see myself as a disabled person	11	22.9	5	10.4	32	67.7
I see myself as any other learner in my class	43	89.6	-	-	5	10.4
I'm appreciated and loved in my school	46	95.8	-	-	2	4.2
Nobody care about LWPDP in our school	11	22.9	2	4.2	35	72.9
In our school LWPDP are discriminated	4	8.3	1	2.1	43	89.6
LWPDP should be in the same school with others	39	81.3	-	-	9	18.8
I see myself as a happy person	37	77.1	4	8.3	7	14.6
People need to feel mercy on me	16	33.3	3	6.3	29	60.4
I am full of energy	29	60.4	5	10.4	12	29.2
I am a weak person	16	33.3	2	4.2	30	62.5

The qualitative results from the Teacher-counsellors Psychological Challenges Facing LWPDP indicated that, most students with physical disability suffered from low self-esteem due to lack of self-acceptance. Majority of the participants unanimously agreed that students with physical disabilities suffered low self-esteem. Most teacher-counsellors said that most of the issues presented during counselling sessions are issues on self-concept, self-acceptance and lack of basic needs. One counsellor declared that rarely do the students go for one-on-one counselling sessions. Some participants felt that the low self-esteem was due to poor self-concept which leads

Psychological Challenges Facing LWPDP

This research question aimed at gathering information about psychological challenges students suffering from physical disability go through in their integrated school after rehabilitation. The results presented in Table 3 indicates that, majority of learners with physical impairment viewed themselves as ordinary people (89.6%) and many (67.7%) disagree that they see themselves as disabled persons. It is apparent that those who feel accepted and loved by their family members see themselves like any other students, while those who feel rejected in the family they see themselves as disabled. Majority of LWPDP describe themselves as happy people (77.1%) and energetic, while many (60.4%) feel they need no mercy from other learner. The findings are similar to [4] who asserts that a person with a disability does not necessarily need help. He says that most people with disabilities try to be as independent as possible and will ask for assistance only if need be, such learners fall under the majority group (89.9%) who feel they are like any other learner. The study presents majority of the participants as wishing to remain integrated with ordinary students (81.3%).

to lack of self-acceptance. The results also indicated that most of the learners suffering from physical impairment were stigmatized not only by the society but also by their own families. This contributes greatly to poor self-concept as the child advances in age. The following are some of the interview transcripts from the teacher-counsellors:

“When these students come for counselling, the issues often repeated are lack acceptance and rejection from the parents. Majority feel their parents do not love them and discriminate them from their siblings. Basic needs like soaps, toiletries, books are not provided, and often the

school or the teachers have to cater for these needs”.

“My parents don’t love me, they reject me. I know it because since I was in the primary school up to now that am in Form 2 they always come to get me 2-3 days after the schools are closed down. They don’t turn up until they are called by the school administration. I don’t know how will be my future after school”.

“I am happy when am here in school because my teachers are loving and care about me. At home nobody cares about me. My parents show me that I cannot do most of the house chores since I am a disabled. I don’t like school-holidays”.

“My mother doesn’t love me. She says I am the reason why they separated with my dad. They separated when I was two years old after seeking medical treatment for me in many hospitals. When he realized my condition couldn’t be treated, he moved away. He married and got other children and none of them have a physical disability”.

Sociological Challenges Facing LWPDP in the Selected Secondary Schools

The Table 4 presents the findings on Teachers’ Perceptions on Sociological Challenges Facing

LWPDP. The results reveals that all the teachers unanimously agree that LWPDP are not isolated by their fellow students, however, their relation with others is only fair 50%. This clearly shows that even though others don’t isolate or discriminate them, they interact more among themselves. Only 30% interacted freely with the other students. However, 65% enjoy warm peer acceptance while only 25% seem to be withdrawn. According to their teachers there exist a good relationship between LWPDP and those without disabilities, 80%. Tested at 95% confidences interval, LWPDP are found to enjoy warm peer acceptance (P-value = 0.019). It is expected that contact with disabled individuals would be associated with increased expressed acceptance towards disabled peers. In addition, majority of respondents shows relationship of LWPDP with other learners being very good (P-value = 0.055). Hence, the results were found statistically significant.

A regression analysis was carried out to find out the significant factors associated with teaching experience and sociological challenges facing LWPDP. The results are presented in Table 5

Table 4: Quantitative results on Teachers’ Perception on Sociological Challenges Facing LWPDP

Factor/ Variable	Agree		Uncertain		Disagree	
	F	%	F	%	F	%
LWPDP interact with others in school freely	6	30.0	-	-	14	70.0
LWPDP enjoy warm peer acceptance	13	65.0	1	5.0	6	30.0
Relation between LWPDP and other learners is very good	16	80.0	-	-	4	20.0
LWPDP are often withdrawn	4	20.0	1	5.0	15	75.0
LWPDP are isolated by other learners	-	-	-	-	20	100.0
Relation between LWPDP and others is very poor	5	25.0	4	20.0	11	55.0
LWPDP often find faults with the other learners	5	25.0	-	-	15	75.0
LWPDP relates freely with others	10	50.0	-	-	10	50.0
They are sociable and approachable	7	35.0	3	15.0	10	50.0
They like to be by themselves	4	20.0	-	-	16	80.0

Table 5: Results of regression analysis on significant factors associated sociological challenges

Model	Std. Error	Standardized Coefficients Beta	t	Sig.	95% Confidence Interval for B
1(Constant)	1.892		-.865	.407	2.579
Interact with others in school freely	.200	-.111	-.421	.683	.361
Enjoy warm peer acceptance	.145	-.559	-2.784	.019	-.081
Are often withdrawn	.309	.774	2.176	.055	1.360
Relation between lwpdp and others poor	.252	.676	2.305	.044	1.144
Often find faults with other learners	.189	-.075	-.293	.775	.365
Relate freely with others	.135	.249	1.480	.170	.502

Sociable and approachable	.154	-.215	-.967	.356	.194
Like to be by themselves	.225	.351	1.107	.294	.750
	.133	.480	2.262	.047	.598

Dependent Variable: Teaching experience

From the results of the regression analysis, shown on Table 5, it is clear that there was a warm peer acceptance with a P value 0.19, which indicated that learners with physical disabilities were warmly accepted by their fellow students without disability unlike in their families where they were not fully accepted. Similarly, the relationship between LWPD and those without disabilities was quite remarkable, $P= 0.055$. Moreover, the majority of the teachers disagreed that the

learners were often withdrawn $P= 0.044$. Tested at 95% Confidence Interval, the teacher's experience played a greater role in rooting out the sociological challenges facing students with physical impairment.

Perspective Sociological Challenges facing LWPD

Table 6 presents the results of perspectives of LWPD on the sociological challenges they faced in their mainstream schools. To achieve this statistical analysis was carried out and the results are presented in Table 6.

Table 6: Quantitative results on Sociological challenges facing LWPD

Factor/ Variable	Agree		Uncertain		Disagree	
	F	%	F	%	F	%
The other student discriminate me	11	22.9	1	2.1	36	75.0
I am loved by my classmates	41	85.4	1	2.1	6	12.5
In school I interact more with LWPD	27	56.3	5	10.4	16	33.3
I interact freely with learners without disability	35	72.9	5	10.4	8	16.7
I sympathize with others who are disabled	26	54.2	2	4.2	20	41.7
I don't feel mercy for LWPD in our school	10	20.8	1	2.1	37	77.1
I relate very well with others	41	85.4	1	2.1	5	10.4
I am often aloof or alone	11	22.9	-	-	37	77.1
I enjoy to be in company of LWPD	39	81.3	3	6.3	6	12.5
I don't like company of other learner	9	18.8	1	2.1	38	79.2

The results in Table 6 shows that majority of the learners (75%) disagreed with the fact that the other students discriminated them while only 11% agreed that they were discriminated. Apparently, LWPD felt loved (85.4%) by the other learners and as a result majority agree (77%) they are not aloof. They related well with others (85.4%) and enjoyed company of both learners with and without disability. Comparatively, small number learners with severe disabilities were often aloof 22.9%, often don't relate well with others 10.4%, and don't enjoy the company of others 18.8%. Most LWPD were found to interact freely with learners without disability (72.9%) than with their counterparts (56.3%). This concurs with the fact that integration helps the children with special conditions to interact with their peers. The study also indicates that in course of daily living, some LWPD do feel pity amongst themselves (77.1%). Physically challenged children may react negatively to their disabilities and hence develop poor self-concept.

The qualitative results from the teacher-counsellors show that majority of LWPD integrated into mainstream schools related quite well with the 'normal' learners. Few teachers reported that the students relate poorly with others who are not physically challenged. Majority of the participants felt that, there was

warm peer acceptance between the physically challenged learners and the ones without

disabilities. Most teacher-participants described the relation among learners with physical disabilities as very good, and all teachers also agreed that there was no labelling of students with physical disabilities neither from the peers nor from the teachers. The following are some interview transcript of the learners' sharing with some of the participants:

"In class my classmates are always willing to assist me. I have friends who are concerned about me while few other are rude and don't care whether am able or not". "Even though most of the times I am alone, it is not because my classmates don't love but because am often thinking about the problems in my family. My parents are often fighting, makes me feel bad. Am happy to be in this school"

The participants' responses in the above interview transcripts revealed the situation of some of the impaired learners at their homes and in schools. The interview transcripts together with the information got from the interview clearly show a good number of the learners feel more comfortable at school than at their home. They lack a sense of belonging in the places they would otherwise call

home. School environment seem to compensate for what they lack.

Discussion

The study investigated the perspectives on psychosocial challenges facing integrated learners with physical disabilities (LWPD) in the selected mainstream secondary schools in Olkalou District in Nyandarua County, Kenya. The findings indicated that the psychological challenges suffered by LWPD were low self-esteem and poor self-concept. Over 90% of the learners who participated in the study revealed lack of self-esteem and poor concept. These findings are in line with [17], who argued that, for a person to achieve high self-esteem; physiological and psychological needs have to be met first. Thus, psychological aspects such as self-esteem, self-acceptance and self-concept are factors for smooth integration into a new environment. Similarly, [11], argues that if intervention is done to remove the psychological barriers which come as a result family background there is possibility that in integration will be easily embraced and the learners with physical disability would be easily assimilated into the schools as well as in to the society. The findings further revealed that, only 30% of the teachers agreed that LWPD showed a sense of belonging in their integrated schools. This finding agrees with [18], who argues that there is a relationship between psychosocial factors and effective integration which eventually lead to academic performance and as a consequence self-esteem is raised. Sitienei [10] asserts that the degree of psychosocial development depends on severity of disability, age of its onset, the degree of visibility, emotional support and encouragement the child gets from parents and other significant figures. The attitude of people towards the child's social status with his/her peers; functionality of the affected body part can also affect the child's psychological development.

However, the findings differ with the policy of [6] which reported that those children who are placed in special educational program due to physical disabilities, which are not severe, may end up developing negative self-concept as they continue interacting with their peers who are severely challenged. This can reduce their opportunity to relate with other non-physically challenged peers diminishing their competence and self-esteem, alienate them from others, nurture a meanness of spirit and make them less persons than they could become. In real life situation, physically challenged children find it very hard not only to

fit into the world of non-disabled people but also in their own families where they are born and bred. Parent and significant others often find it hard to accept and love them unconditionally, as observed by the researcher. Psychologically as they grow up they are affected and these precipitate low self-esteem as they advance in age. The self-concept of a learner who is physically challenged depends on the way they view their disabilities and the way others treat them. In our society, the disabled persons are socially devalued and this gives clear evidence why disabled persons have low self-concept especially when they are in un-conducive environment. These children require a lot of emotional support from their parents, teachers, peers and the society at large. They need to be assisted to be mobile as possible through rehabilitation after which they are integrated into regular schools for inclusive education. When they are ignored, shown rejection and neglected, they develop negative self-concept. It is the school's responsibility to provide an amiable environment, where teachers and peers understand and encourage them to see themselves as any other learner. Moral support is needed from both the school and the home.

The findings on sociological challenges indicated that, majority of the learners disagreed with the fact that the other students discriminated them while only a few agreed that they were discriminated against. This is in line with Chickering theory as pointed out by [8] that the degree of psychosocial development depends on severity of disability, age of its onset, the degree of visibility, emotional support and encouragement the child gets from parents and significant others. Moreover, Chickering argues that not only does change occur in the students' academic and social development, but also in their psychosocial development [8]. The results are similar to [11] who found that for physically challenged children, self-concept depended on the way they viewed that their disabilities and the way others view them. Muigai [12] argues that discrimination and isolation impede education of girls with physical disabilities; lack of conducive school environment and structures discourage girls with physical disabilities from continuing schooling. The findings show the learners are not discriminated neither isolated, thus can go through psychosocial developmental stages [8]. Melinda [9] also reported that students are more likely to remain enrolled in an institution if they become connected to the social and academic life of that institution.

Comparatively, integration program according [6] is aimed at removing existing barriers that make them become anti-social members of the society. However a minimal number of LWPD don't interact freely with their counterparts, therefore there is a great need to offer counselling services to physically impaired children both in the rehabilitation centres and in the mainstream schools. It is a known fact that disability always has some emotional problems tied to it. The impaired student may see that they are different from other students and keep on nursing the trauma of disability as they grow up. This greatly inhibits psychosocial growth and development. Keitany [13] echoes similar sentiments when he says counselling and interactive integration can be open doors to exposure and experiences that the child needs in order to grow in competence, to become a person sure of his/her worth and appreciative of the worth of others, and thus live with zest and know joy.

Implications of the Study

The findings indicated that, the disabled persons feel socially devalued and this gives clear evidence why they have low self-concept especially when they are in un-conducive environment. The implication of this finding is that, LWPD require a lot of emotional support from their parents, teachers, peers and the society at large, in that, they need to be assisted to be mobile as possible through rehabilitation after which they are integrated into regular schools for inclusive education. Therefore, it is the school's responsibility to provide an amiable environment, where teachers and peers understand and encourage them to see themselves as any other learner. There is an alarming call for comprehensive implementation of inclusive education policy and proper guidelines on mainstreaming of special needs education at all levels and in the country.

The study further showed that LWPD whose early experiences was unsatisfactory, inconsistent, unhappy their social life was affected, their relations with others who were not physically challenged was strained. For example, they identified easily with other learners who had the same problems. Therefore, the severe the disability the greater the risk physiological and social maladjustment, which include learners confined to wheelchairs and those imputed after an accident or an ailment. The implication is that, to assist these learners to come out of their cocoons of self-pity they should be offered opportunity to interact with others freely and feel accepted in the school community regardless of

their disabilities. Teacher and school counsellors have a great role to play in the lives of physically challenged learners as well as their parents. Social acceptance of physically challenged children in school community is a way of helping them to view their disability more positively.

Although the Government has made progress in the provision of educational services for persons with special needs and disabilities, there is great need for training and in service of teachers who handle learners with special needs. Moreover, schools should employ qualified counsellors to assist the physically impaired learners.

Limitations of the Study

The area of disability is very broad; this study is limited to learners living with physical disability in selected mainstream secondary schools. With physically challenged learners the researcher refers to learners, who are impaired, a condition that limits and restricts their mobility and ability to perform activities in a way that is considered normal for human beings [19-21].

Conclusion

From the study it is evident that learners with physical disabilities in integrated schools suffered low self-esteem and they found it very hard not only to fit into the world of non-disabled people. Therefore, an enabling and supportive environment for physically handicapped children would minimize psychological and sociological problems the learner may face in the learning institutions. The Social model theory of disability emphasizes on first seeing the strength of the learner rather than the disability unlike the society's view. In an inclusive setting, it is the school's responsibility to re-adjust to meet the learners' needs but not the learner to adjust to meet the requirements of the school. The study also found out that, warm social relationship from their fellow peers and teachers impacts positively on integration of physically impaired learners in the new environment. There is great need to offer counselling services to physically impaired children in the mainstream schools, to help the student come out of the stigma acquired from the society. The impaired student may see that they are different from other students and keep on nursing the trauma of disability as they grow up. This greatly inhibits psychosocial growth and development. It is through the intervention of a psychological counsellor that the learner will learn that disability is not disability.

Physically challenged children are capable of doing well in schools, hence there is need to be assisted to fit well in any educational program in

order to unleash their potentials. Those with mild disability should be integrated in public primary schools. Those with very severe disabilities need to be given priority in special schools. The Government should provide special trained teachers to mainstream schools. Remedial classes should be given especially when they miss school due some medical issues. These learners may not move at the same rate with their classmates and so they greatly need some emotional support and understanding from the teachers and the peers. The integration of physically handicapped learners into mainstream schools has positive

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