

**CHALLENGES FACING CHILDREN WITH SPECIAL NEEDS IN
PURSUING EDUCATION IN THIKA SUB-COUNTY, KIAMBU COUNTY**

BY

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DECLARATION

This is my original work and it has not been submitted for a Masters Degree course in any other University.

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Date.....

This research project has been submitted for examination with my approval as the university supervisor.

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DEDICATION

To my loving mother Jane Wambui Mungai who stood by me and believed in me, your support greatly encouraged me. To my dear husband John Momanyi and dear son Wayne Trayvon Momanyi, for being my pillar of strength.

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ABSTRACT

This was a cross-sectional study on challenges facing children with special needs in pursuing education in Thika Sub-County, Kiambu County. Specifically the study sought to identify the challenges faced by children with special needs in pursuing education and identify strategies put in place to address the challenges facing children with special needs in pursuing education. The study was guided by the theory of stigma by Goffman 1963. Which states that the society brings about stigma which pertains to the shame that a person may feel when he or she fails to meet others and fear of being discredited; which causes the individual not to reveal his or her shortcomings.

The study used a sample of twenty two children who were purposively selected for in-depth interviews and twenty two teachers who were purposively selected for key informant expert interviews. Data collected was through in-depth interviews, key informant interviews and analyzed thematically guided by the study objectives. The study findings indicate that economic, social-cultural, policy frameworks and school related challenges make the pursuit of education for children with special needs challenging.

The parents are poor thus unable to purchase the high costly instructional materials for their children with special needs to access all inclusive educational services. Socially, there should be a range of inclusive settings whereby the CWSN can feel included and be best served. Such settings could be arranged within the school premises, family circles, at community gatherings to ensure the opportunities for social interaction. The study concludes that new policy frameworks should be put in place to allow the government to allocate more funds for special schools and units to enable a smooth learning environment through provision of learning materials and enough teachers trained in special needs education for children with special needs which in turn boosts the pursuit of education for the children with special needs.

LIST OF ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

CWSN	Children with Special Needs
FPE	Free Primary Education
GOK	Government of Kenya
KISE	Kenya Institute of Special Needs
MDGs	Millennium Development Goals
MOEST	Ministry of Education Science and Technology
NGOs	Non Governmental Organization
SNE	Special Needs Education
UN	United Nations
UNESCO	United Nations Education Scientific Cultural Organization
UNICEF	United Nations Children Emergency Fund
WHO	World Health Organization

CHAPTER ONE

1.0 BACKGROUND TO THE STUDY

1.1 Introduction

The Government of Kenya (GOK) recognizes the importance of Special Needs Education as a crucial subsector for accelerating the attainment of Education for All (EFA), the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) and the achievement of Vision 2030, Sessional Paper No 1 of 2005 on 'A Policy Framework for Education, Training and Research' outlines the vision of our education sector as a major enabler of our youth. This vision will be achieved through the provision of quality education that is accessible and relevant to the lives of all children including those with Special Needs. Such an education will contribute significantly towards provision of employment opportunities and self-reliance.

Kenya's earliest efforts of organized care and provision of special needs education dates back to the late 1940s, with much involvement of the religious institutions, notably the Salvation Army Church and much later the Anglican, the Catholic, the Methodist and the Presbyterian churches in establishing special schools and institutions for children with visual, hearing, physical and mental disabilities in various parts of the country where they had mission. Since then the management of most of these institutions has been taken over by the Ministry of Education. (SNE Draft policy July 2009).

In article 54 (1) of the Kenyan Constitution 2010 a disabled person is entitled to access educational institutions and facilities for persons with disabilities that are entitled into society to the extent compatible with the interests of the person.

Since the introduction of FPE in 2003 the Ministry of Education has undertaken several measures to enable children with special needs access education. Amongst the key milestones of the Ministry efforts is the setting up of a task force (Dr. Kochung Taskforce 2003) whose objectives was to appraise the status of special education in the country.

The Dr. Kochung report's key recommendations were as follows; training and in-service of teachers for children with Special Needs, strengthening Educational Assessment and Resource Centers (EARCs) through increased budgetary allocation and equipping, carrying out of special needs National Survey to establish population of Special Needs children in and out of school and an inventory of assistive devices and equipment available in our schools and Special Needs schools be made barriers free to enhance access.

The implementation of Free Primary Education (FPE) led to an influx and inclusion of new categories of Special Needs Children such as autistic children, those with down syndrome, cerebral palsy, loco-motor impairment, maladjusted children, multiple handicapped children and gifted and talented learners in public schools. These increased demands from parents and teachers overstretched the ministry's resources.

Based on this background, the study sought to explore the challenges facing children with special needs in pursuing education in Thika Sub-County, Kiambu County.

1.2 Statement of the problem

The government and private institutions have over the years identified the low societal recognition of children with special needs and the need to academically empower them. Civil societies and religious organizations have pushed to agitate for their rights and established academic institutions, both pure and integrated, to address this unique need. The government has enacted legislation and allocated more funds to protect and provide for this group of children with special needs. In spite of all the efforts of the GOK children with special needs are still not pursuing education despite Kiambu County having the largest number of public special schools.

As the first time county government in the new constitutional and political dispensation of the country, Kiambu County has allocated funds to booster the support of special needs students their academic pursuits. In spite of numerous efforts by both National and County government of Kiambu, children with special needs face many challenges in pursuit of their education. It is against this background that this study seeked to identify challenges and remedies facing children with special needs.

This study undertook to explore the challenges facing children with special needs in pursuing education and was guided by the following questions:

- i) What are the challenges facing children with special needs in pursuing education in Thika Sub-County, Kiambu County?
- ii) How are the challenges facing children with special needs to pursuing education being addressed in Thika Sub-County, Kiambu County?

1.3 Study Objectives

1.3.1 General objectives

To explore the challenges facing children with special needs in pursuing education in Thika Sub-County, Kiambu County.

1.3.2 Specific Objectives

- i) To identify the challenges facing children with special needs in pursuing education in Thika Sub-County, Kiambu County.
- ii) To identify strategies for addressing challenges facing children with special needs in pursuing education Thika Sub-County, Kiambu County.

1.4 Justification of the Study

The study findings contribute to the advancement of knowledge in the area of Special Needs Education as there is limited information on such a theme particularly in Thika Sub-County, Kiambu County. These study findings are particularly useful as a reference point in making decisions on special needs education. These study findings informs the relevant stakeholders in the sector, on the status of and the challenges facing children with special needs in pursuing education.

1.5 Scope and Limitations of the Study

The study was carried out in Thika Sub-County which covers an area of 217.60 square kilometers. A total of 11 special schools and units were selected for the study. Of particular interest in the study were challenges facing children with special needs in these schools.

The study will mainly deal with factors challenging the pursuit of education by children with special needs. The study used a small sample size given its qualitative approach limiting the generalization of the findings, however, data collection methods have been triangulated to yield rich data that answer to the study questions.

1.6 Definition of terms

Disability/Special needs: According to World Health Organization, it is defined as: Any restriction or lack of ability to perform in a manner or within a range considered normal for a human being (WHO, 1996). Elsewhere it has been defined as a physical or mental condition, which makes it difficult or impossible for a person, concerned to adequately fulfill his or her role in society (National Disability Survey of Zimbabwe, 1982).

Special Schools: These are schools set aside to offer education to children with special needs in education, based on their respective disability.

Special Units/Special Classes: These are classes set aside either in regular or special schools to cater for needs of learners with special needs. The classes should not be less than 15 children.

Special Needs Education: This is education which provides appropriate modification in curriculum delivery methods, educational resources, medium of communication or the learning environment in order to cater for individual differences in learning.

Special Needs Education Teacher: This is a teacher who is trained to teach and support learners with special needs in education.

Support Staff: These are personnel who are employed to assist learners with special needs and disabilities in institutions and include cooks, house mothers/fathers, drivers and others.

Specialist Support Staff: These are trained personnel employed/deployed to provide professionally recognized services, other than teaching, to learners with special needs and disabilities. These include sign language interpreters, sighted guides, refractionists, braillists, transcribers, readers, physiotherapists, occupational therapists, counselors, orientation and mobility trainers and ICT experts.

Teacher Aides: Staff that assist teachers in special needs education to carry out some of the duties due to the diversity of the learner's needs.

Tactile: These are formats that facilitate reading through the use of touch such as Braille, embossed maps and touch sign for the deaf blind and the blind.

Accessibility: This is the right or opportunity of reaching, obtaining and using a service and for purposes of this study, accessibility means to go to school, attain education and make use of existing facilities.

CHAPTER TWO

2.0 LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Introduction

This section presents a review of literature related to this study. The review has been done across the following topics: economic challenges, social-cultural challenges, school related and policy frameworks in place to address challenges facing children with special needs in pursuing education. The section finally presents the theoretical framework and the assumptions guiding the study.

2.2 Social-cultural factors

These are variables factors which are explained from culture, tradition, sex, ethnicity and religion. The child with special needs is unable to access meaningful education because society is organized to meet the needs of non-disabled people as manifested by the negative attitude that hampers their efforts to lead ordinary lives. For instance the, stereotyping of mental health patients as 'mad men' not only affects their emotional and self-esteem but keeps them away from mainstream society.

A case in point is of “Adam of Mtwara who lived rough due to mental illness deprived of his family, he survived in the bush, foraging for food and putting up with the cruelty, he was subjected to yet his family lives in the same village” (Basic Needs Review, 2004) This stigmatization and lack of acceptance by his family and mainstream society cast him out of any possible educational opportunities.

Traditionally and culturally, African society held negative attitudes and beliefs towards disability and the CWSN. Often disability is associated with witchcraft and

promiscuity during pregnancy and punishment by ancestral spirits. Intra-house relations may also affect access to all pursuit of education by CWSN as parents with low education levels tend to have less interest in education and maybe reluctant to invest in the education of their children. CWSN even at family level are neglected and rejected by their families whereby the disabled are rarely sent to school. In the uncaring society with a notorious global reputation for hypocritical piety and institutionalized neglect of the poor and disadvantaged.

For example it is believed that across the Sub continent of India's estimated 40 million children aged 4-16years with mental and physical disabilities are out of School. (Nine-tenths of them). The overwhelming majority of them are vagabonds not out of volition but because of callous communities and parents ([http://Indiatogether.Org/2014/oct/educ-inclusive .htm-](http://Indiatogether.Org/2014/oct/educ-inclusive.htm))

2.3 Economic factors

Poverty among household of CWSN and ignorance result into parents not procuring the instructional materials for their children and absence of disability friendly facilities in school respectively thus makes access to pursuit of education for CWSN a challenge. Similarly poverty at the macro levels affects the budgetary allocation to the education sector which in turn affects individual school or pupil allocations as the costs of CWSN materials and learning equipments is high.

This high cost of instructional materials of CWSN further makes the pursuit of education services a challenge as they compete un favorably with those of normal children. For example on average educational and instructional materials for a child

with visual impairment for primary school could include perkins Braille, cubes for arithmetic cubarithm board games, thermo form machine, binding and spiral machine, and mobility cane.

Budget allocations to the SNE by the government is also not enough as we really more on aid and unless the Unless the external debt is solved so as to increase budget allocation fund to the special needs education it is unrealistic to expect that the Education For All (EFA) target can be reached to the children with special needs.

Farrant (1989) and (EENET, 1998) advise that teaching or learning materials should be selected according to the specific needs of the learners. Failure to get such materials, teachers resort to using only blackboards which are not effective for all pupils in inclusive classes for example learners with Autism. Education is not only about good quality teachers and materials. It is also about quality learners, children need to be health and well nourished (<http://www.unicef.org/2014/oct/educ.inclusive.htm>).

2.4 Policy frameworks

Education is an important investment that a country can make and enhancing accessibility to educational services is significant in the development of a nation (World Bank, 1993).

This is because education positively affects socio-economic behaviour such as productivity, living standards, health and demographic characteristics of any population. Likewise, it opens infinite possibilities for society that would otherwise be

denied namely; a better chance to lead healthy and productive lives, building strong and nurturing families, participating fully in civic affairs of their communities, molding morals and value creating culture and shaping history. It is a solid foundation for progress and sustainable development, an inherent human rights and critical step towards dismantling the gender discrimination that threatens all other rights catalyzing freedom and democracy within borders and extending its reach as an agent of international peace and security (UNICEF, 2000). It's therefore, societal obligations to make the provision of education to all people according to the nature of their individual's needs and capacity (Okech, 1993).

The ineffective policy environment results into unfavorable school based factors like non-committed teachers, inappropriate curriculum, and poor distribution of schools, absence of disability friendly facilities and establishment of day schools which subjects the CWSN to long distances and insecurity as they commute to and from school. Significant gains have been realized in the provision of education to children with special needs over the past six years. Among the major milestones in special needs education are the Disability Act 2003, The Report of the Taskforce on Special Needs Education appraisal exercise of 2003, increased funding to SNE and increased support to teacher's training for SNE at KISE.

The Government of Kenya is committed to the provision of equal access to quality and relevant education and training opportunities to all Kenyans. Towards this goal, the government has ratified and domesticated various global policy frameworks in education. The government signed Article 26 of the Universal Declaration of Human

Rights (1948), consequently recognizing and committing itself to the right of every child to access education.

The Article recognizes the intrinsic human value of education, underpinned by strong moral and legal foundations. Other international policy frameworks ratified and signed by the government include, (but are not limited to) the 1989 United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC), the 1990 African Charter on the Rights and Welfare of the Child, Salamanca Statement (1994), the Framework for Action on Special Needs Education (1999), the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) and Education For All (EFA) by 2015.

Educational opportunities for children with special needs and disabilities are a major challenge to the education sector. The national education system has been characterized by inadequate systems and facilities that respond to the challenges faced by learners with special needs and disabilities. Rule number 6 of the United Nations Standard Rules on the Equalization of Opportunities, not only affirms the equal rights of children, youth and adults with handicaps to education, but also states that education should be provided 'in integrated school settings' and 'in the general school setting'. There is need to link inclusive education with wider community-based programmes for Persons with special needs and disabilities.

Majority of learners with Special Needs and Disabilities in Kenya do not access educational services. For instance, in 1999 there were only 22,000 learners with special needs and disabilities enrolled in special schools, units and integrated programs. This number rose to 26,885 in 2003 and 45,000 in 2008, which compares

poorly with the proportion in general education. (SNE Draft Policy July 2009). In view of the above, this situation calls for a re-appraisal of available approaches to expand Special Needs Education services so as to achieve an enrolment rate at par with that of other children. To attain this, Kenya needs to ensure the realization of inclusive education and simultaneously develop and implement guidelines that mainstream special needs education at all levels of the education system.

Since independence there have been various policy recommendations given by education commissions and committees. Recommendations from these commissions have been used to direct and advise on the provision of education to learners with special needs and disabilities.

However, most of these past recommendations have not been put into a legal document or harmonized for smooth provision of special needs education.

In order to implement to the recommendations of the various committees and commissions and to respond to the needs of stakeholders in education, particularly those with special needs in Kenya, there is need for a clear vision and goal on SNE to be entrenched in the policy document.

The National SNE policy framework therefore will serve to harmonize education service provision for learners with special needs and disabilities in Kenya. The policy shall provide a comprehensive framework of the principles and strategies to be followed in order to create equal access to quality and relevant education and training for these learners. It will also acknowledge other initiatives that are ongoing to bridge

any gaps arising out of provision of SNE, identifying extra measures to be taken by the government and other stakeholders to address inequities and inequalities.

The Persons with Disabilities Act (2003) further provides a comprehensive legal framework which outlaws all forms of discriminative treatment of persons with special needs and disabilities. This includes, among others, access to education and training. It provides for adaptation of infrastructural, socio-economic and environmental facilities to ensure a conducive environment for persons with special needs and disabilities. The Children's Act (2001) harmonizes all existing laws and policies on children into one document and aims at improving the well being of ALL children irrespective of whether they are disabled or not.

The development of the National Special Needs Education Policy Framework in Kenya is taking place at a time when the international community is in agreement that education is the main driver in the attainment of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). In an attempt to provide quality special needs education, the government has committed itself towards inclusive education and has set out to re-examine the provision of education to all through review of existing physical facilities, curriculum, instruction materials and teacher preparation to ensure that all learners have equal access to quality and relevant education.

2.5 School-related factors

Though children with disabilities are enrolled in primary schools, very few complete the primary cycle of education in Kenya. This is attributed to the present primary curriculum that does not serve the needs of the disabled. The current curriculum and

examination system are not flexible and do not cater for SNE as the assessment of CWSN has not been standardized.

Teachers training CWSN need special expertise in developing systematic ways that they can account for the special education they are giving their pupils and that good teaching practice will become more widely accepted. (UNESCO 2000). The negative attitude to CWSN of both teachers and peers has affected the retention of CWSN in schools. Amongst the most common attitudes are those of disabled people are incapable, aggressive, in need of charity, and of low intelligence. The use of offensive terminology and stereotypical views of disabled people such as ‘twisted bodies result into twisted minds’ and representation of disability as monstrous and horrific, partly explains the low retention (Keynes, 1990). The use of abuse words like ‘kirimu’ (foolish) dehumanizes and reduces them to objectives.

Similarly Gregory et al (1998) also concurs, that children who find themselves unacceptable to their peers or in unsatisfactory relationship with their teachers, life in school becomes a punishing experience. As without friends many of the activities they undertake are meaningless. People without friends are an exceptionally vulnerable group, their health and welfare is constantly at risk.

2.6 Theoretical Framework

2.6.1 Theory of stigma

The study was guided by the theory of stigma. According to Goffman (1963) the society brings about stigma which pertains to the shame that a person may feel when

he or she fails to meet others and fear of being discredited; which causes the individual not to reveal his or her shortcomings.

The theory posits that in every society some persons have greater power than others and that those with power generally impose their norms, values, and beliefs on those that are without power. Those with power (the non-disabled) set the standards that are to be expected of all individuals within a given culture. They also determine how each member of that culture is to be categorized (Becker & Arnold, 1986) such that if one does not concur with those standards, then that individual is perceived as being 'deviant' (Goffman, 1963). The theory identified three forms of stigma which act to mark the less powerful as 'different':

- a) Abominations of the body or various physical deformities,
- b) Blemishes of character or weak will, domineering or unnatural beliefs, values and attitudes,
- c) Tribal stigma or race, nation and religion (Titchkosky, 2003).

Each of these instances of stigma marks the individual who bears them as having 'undesired differentness'. That individual, thus, becomes perceived as being 'deviant' or not quite human (Goffman, 1963). These different forms of stigma show how stigmatization creates a shared, socially maintained, and determined conception of a normal individual (the normate), sculpted by a social group attempting to define its own character and boundaries (Garland-Thomson, 1997). Dominant groups construct stereotypes which stigmatize groups that they deem inferior and thus facilitate the exercising of authority over them (Goffman, 1963; Ainlay, Becker, & Coleman, 1986). This process also governs the treatment of people with disabilities in society. The dominant groups, who often happen to be the non- disabled, create standards, and

those who do not fit those standards are seen as ‘different’. This ‘differentness’ is abstracted or reinforced by stigmatization, and this stigma facilitates social influence and control. One will find stigmatizing terms such as ‘cripple’, ‘crip’ and ‘gimp’ and descriptors such as ‘victim’, ‘unfortunate’ and ‘helpless’ being used, wittingly or unwittingly, to reinforce the status of people with disabilities in society’ (Tompkins, 1996).

These terms reflect the dominant group’s tastes, opinions, and idealized descriptions of what is normal (Garland-Thomson, 1997). Stigma, therefore, is a comparative or scaling tool that is used to construct ‘in’ and ‘out’ groups in society.

2.6.2 Relevance to the Study

Disability in its social context in order to show that disability is a result of complex intersecting social and cultural relations in Thika Sub-County. The theory provides an understanding of the ways in which power relationships between the people with disabilities and those without disabilities are structured.

Such domination limits people with disabilities’ pursuit to education, wealth, power, and other opportunities in society promoting a critical engagement with the relations of power embedded in societal institutions/structures that serve to reproduce and maintain social discrimination and inequities.

Such a perspective is important in understanding the barriers people with disabilities face specifically in Thika Sub-County and the unique stigma and learning challenges they encounter in their quest to gain a meaningful education.

2.7 Assumptions

- i. Children with special needs encounter a number of challenges that are unique to them compared to their normal compatriots, in pursuing education which impair their performance.
- ii. Children with special needs (other than certain mentally impaired children) are able to learn and internalize knowledge and skills just like normal children.
- iii. There exists social stereotyping, prejudicial perception and attitudes that actually influence the pursuit of education for children with special needs.

CHAPTER THREE

3.1 INTRODUCTION

This section presents research site, research design, study population, sample size, sampling techniques and data collection methods and analysis. The section also presents ethical considerations that guided the study.

3.2 Research Site

The study was carried out within the political boundaries of Thika Sub-County in Kiambu County covering an area of 216.72 square kilometers where there are 11 special schools and units that cater for both boys and girls and enrolled children with special needs from all over the country.



Figure 3.1 Map of Kiambu County

Source: Survey of Kenya 2010

The schools are;

1)Thika Primary School for the Blind(mixed)2) Joy-Town Primary school (mixed),3) ST. Patricks special unit primary school (mixed),4) Gachororo Special Unit Primary School (mixed),5) Garissa Road Special Unit Primary School (mixed),6) Githunguri Primary Special Unit (mixed),7) Kimuchu Primary Special Unit (mixed),8) Kwihota Special Unit Primary School (mixed),9) Maria Magdalena Special Primary School (girls),10) Mwea Special Unit Primary School (mixed),11) Kairi Primary Special Unit School (mixed).

3.3 Research Design

The study was a cross-sectional exploratory study using qualitative method. In-depth interviews and questionnaire methods were used in data collection. Data collected have been analyzed according to themes guided by the study objectives.

3.4 Study Population

The study targeted all all the children with special needs pursuing education in special schools and units in Thika Sub-County, Kiambu County. The unit of analysis was the individual informant defined as a child with special needs in Thika Sub-County, Kiambu County.

3.5 Sample Size and Sampling Techniques

Twenty two teachers were drawn across the 11 special schools and units for self administered questionnaires. Twenty two students were also drawn across the 11 special schools and units for in-depth interviews. Informants for in-depth interviews were purposely sampled based on their experience in pursuing special needs

education. Key informants were purposively sampled based on professionalism and understanding of the topic under study.

3.6 Data Collection Methods

3.6.1 In-depth Interviews

These were conducted with twenty two pupils aged 14-17 drawn across eleven primary schools and special units in Thika Sub-County, Kiambu County .The interviews yielded information on economic, social-cultural and school related challenges faced by children with special needs in pursuing education. In-depth interview guide (Appendix 1) was used to collect data.

3.6.2 Key Informant Interviews

These were conducted with twenty two primary school teachers. The information obtained from the key informants helped to compliment the main study. The key informant interviews yielded data on challenges faced by children with special needs in pursuing education. The key informant interview guide (Appendix 2) was used to collect data.

3.7 Data Processing and Analysis

Data obtained for in-depth interviews and key informant interviews were analyzed thematically guided by the study objectives. A descriptive approach was used where statements that reinforce arguments within the themes have been presented in verbatim.

3.8 Ethical Considerations

The researcher acquired a research permit from the Ministry of Education through the National Commission for Science, Technology and Innovation(NACOSTI) and from the Kiambu County Council. Informed verbal consent was sought from the respective school's head teachers. Informed consent was directly sought from the children after receiving the head teachers consent.

The participants were taken through the purpose and objectives of the study and any other concerns before the interviews took off. The participants were also informed of their rights to disqualify themselves from the study at any stage in the interview process. The researcher has maintained confidentiality of the study participants through the use pseudonyms.

CHAPTER FOUR

4.0 DATA PRESENTATION AND ANALYSIS

4.1 Introduction

This chapter presents the findings on challenges faced by children with special needs in pursuing education in Thika Sub-County, Kiambu County. The chapter starts with presentation of the demographic characteristics of the informants and then discusses the rest of the findings.

Perception of Disability

Initially the researcher sought to find out the respondents perception of disability and knowledge of various types of disability. The following general definition of disability emerged from the various respondents.

Category of Respondents	General Perception
Teachers	It is where one is not capable because of impairment Someone is disabled if they cannot use part or whole of the body due to illness or injury.
Children	Definitions from the children were so limited to the disabilities they have either suffered or have seen others suffering from. For instance physical disability was well known to all of them.

4.2 Economic challenges

Respondents were also presented with cross section of economic factors and asked to indicate their opinion whether the factors were hindrances to CWSN to access education. Below is the summary of responses from the various group's respondents under various sub-sections as below;

4.2.1 Poverty among household of CWSN

The study findings revealed that poverty indeed is seriously deterring the CWSN from pursuing education. The researcher notes that poverty does not only affect access to education for CWSN only but also for other children too that is why concepts like the Education for All (EFA) and its offspring, FPE came into existence. But the researcher agrees with the respondents that because of the perceived added costs of health related problems, the problem is relatively deeper when the CWSN are involved. And there does not seem to be any poverty reduction strategies being mainstreamed in all development initiatives through affirmative action to the CWSN. Eighty five percent of the families with CWSN live in destitution and deprivation, in rural areas where they are detached from much of the benefits and amenities such as communication, transportation, and certain advanced technological facilities.

4.2.2 High costs of CWSN material and equipment

All the key respondents 90% of teachers and 80% of the children agreed that prohibitively exorbitant nature of materials and equipment like crutches, wheelchairs, Brailles, Perkins cubes for arithmetic used by CWSN deterred access to all inclusive education services. This is in total agreement with (Skjorten,1995) and

(Kimbugwe,2002) who explained that the high cost of instructional materials of CWSN further curtailed their access to all inclusive education services.

The high cost of equipments, coupled with the rampant poverty predetermines the near or total absence of instructional materials. There does not seem to be a policy to ensure the massive distribution of these materials. The government ought to do something. Parents can hinder their children with special needs from accessing education by failure to provide materials aids and appliances to facilitate teaching and learning of CWSN and not treating them equally like their able-bodied peers.

This is in conformity with Christoffel Blind mission worldwide services to the Blind and other disabled persons, which quotes the average cost of instructional materials for visually impaired children at 3,632. 12 Euros which is quite a lot of money for both the government that is FPE allocation to school materials.

4.3 The Effect of Socio-Cultural Factors

Respondents were presented with an array of socio-cultural factors such as negative teachers and peer attitude, negative parental attitudes and practices, isolation, religious influence and asked to indicate their opinion whether the factors were hindrances to CWSN to access education. Below is the summary of responses and interpretations from the various group's respondents.

4.3.1 Negative teachers and peer attitude

Almost all Key respondents 90% of children agreed negative peer and teacher attitude like calling names like 'kirimu' affects the CWSN pursuit of education. Only

40% of teachers agreed, while 45% disagreed and 15% either did not know or did not respond.

The fact that two of the respondent groups agree reaffirms that negative teachers and peers attitude indeed affects all CWSN meaningful access to education. The apparent relatively stronger disagreement seems to be arising from a defensive point of view, because the question was asked as all-inclusive. It was not specific. The balance of responses is related to the specific question about commitment and skill of teachers.

4.3.2 Negative parental attitude and practices

Here the teachers strongly agreed (90%) that negative parental attitudes characterized by lack of interest by parents of CWSN is very pertinent to deterring access to education for CWSN.

Perceived together, the analysis of the two foregoing issues strongly reaffirms the validity and effect of negative attitudes, no matter from who towards CWSN access to education. This conforms to earlier researchers like Katz (1960), Perkins and Greenwald (1989) who argued that attitudes fulfilled various psychological functions. Likewise the Basic Needs Review (2004) argued that stigmatization and lack of acceptance by society casts CWSN out of any educational opportunities.

One CWSN who is mentally retarded and currently goes to Garrissa Road Special Unit Primary School , says that his father was hesitant to enroll him into school because he heard him say that “he would bite other children” but the mother insisted and he was enrolled in school. The study interviewed at least five other CWSN who

said that the impetus to enroll them into school was their mothers rather than their fathers.

In one case the CWSN said that he had heard the father quarreling with his mother that in their clan they did not produce lame children that my mother was the one who knew who my father was. This negative attitude of the father is surprising but true.

A female pupil of Gachororo Special Unit Primary School has had to do without uniform because whenever she asks the father for it, the father tells her to buy it herself. Her able bodied siblings have no such problem.

An sixteen year class 7 pupil at Mwea Special Unit Primary School tells a Story in her own words:

“My father treats me badly. He refuses to buy school requirements for me and I am sent home all the time. This makes him happy and he sends me to the garden, thereby I miss school until a good Samaritan pays my school dues.”

The above situation concurs with (Kaguire, 2004) that the low demand for education could be associated with the perception of benefit of education by parents.

Not all fathers however, are negative minded one pupil of Joy Town Primary School confessed that her father buys for her all the necessary scholastic materials and he promptly pays all the school dues. He also made sure that I have this pair of crutches to ease my movement because my feet swell in hot weather and the pain is too much.

Another pupil whose mother also abandoned her and now it is her father who cares for her and her siblings.

The former cases can be attributed to African cultural factors were lame children are associated with witchcraft and prostitution of the mothers during pregnancy hence punishment by ancestral spirits. Whereas the latter is explained by the massive awareness raising sensitization campaign that disability is not inability and disability is not a curse, conducted through workshops for national and local government officials ,community leaders ,social workers and also the presence of teachers trained in SNE in this school who speaks to parents about the needs of CWSN. Many parents of CWSN previously thought that paying school fees for them was a complete waste of time, but with FPE, CWSN got a golden chance to attend school.

4.3.3 Isolation

100% of the key respondents and 75.5% children underlined isolation as a crucial factor. The teachers seemed to be relatively indecisive with 45% pointing at this factor while 49% disagreed. Some teachers, who disagreed pointed out that it was no longer relevant for parents to isolate their children since education was universal.

4.3.4 Religious influence

The majority of respondents in all three groups do not perceive religion to be of any influence to CWSN access to education, with Key Respondents in disfavor at 70%. These responses did not observe any relations between respondents of various religions sending their children to school.

However one teacher of Joy Town Primary School said that in the Islam religion it is believed that being disabled is God's plan to prevent that person from doing something wrong. This contrasts with Keynes (1999) quoting the Old Testament

where the disabled are labeled as a thread of uncleanness and inherited sin. This could be explained by the new testament where Jesus performed multitudes of healing on the crippled for instance (Mark 10:51), this was an indicator to the Christian Community that all the people whether normal or disabled were still a reflection of God's image thus should be treated the same.

4.4 The Effect of School Related Factors

Respondents were also presented with an array of school related factors and asked to indicate their opinion whether the factors were hindrances to CWSN to access education. Below is the summary of responses from the various group's respondents.

4.4.1 Curriculum and teaching style

85% of key respondents cited the curriculum as incomprehensive and thus affecting the access of CWSN to education. However, teachers disagreed and most of the children (98%) had nothing to say. In other words they did not know either way.

The teachers blame the gaps in the teaching curriculum, the lack of SNE skills by most teachers, the lack of special instructional materials for CWSN and the heavy class-loads created by FPE.

Kenya uses a common core curriculum which is a mere transmission of knowledge rather than one framed in terms of developing understanding of the child and growth of critical awareness. Kelly (1999) also stresses the need of a comprehensive curriculum that is basic learning needs and a common curriculum. (Okech, 1993) also noted that the current curriculum does not serve the needs of the disabled.

The researcher established that there is no special curriculum for CWSN in SNE but there are some special measures that can be used to support the present curriculum to teach CWSN. These measures are in place in special schools for CWSN. SNE teachers are well trained in these special measures but in the absence of the special materials and equipment in all of the schools there is little they can do.

4.4.2 Lack of instructional materials

The study findings agreed that the lack of instructional materials affects the access to education for CWSN. This is directly related to poor macro policy on these materials and the high costs on the open market. The critical lack of instructional materials means that though learning is in place the CWSN are not meaning fully benefiting from it as similarly manifested by the high cost instructional materials.

No special instructional materials whatsoever were observed in any of the eleven schools under the study. School administrators said they cannot afford them since the FPE grant allocated to instructional materials is too little. CWSN said that they do not know whether there were special gadgets that they could use.

When CWSN lack learning aids and support appliances, their mobility is reduced their slow learning pace, due to not being able to hear properly, not seeing properly, not being able to express themselves properly, or writing slower, and under unfriendly facilities results in many of them failing to pass exams.

4.4.2 Unavailability of teachers trained in SNE

The key informants in the study reaffirmed the phenomenon that there are minimal numbers of teachers trained in SNE thus affecting effective access of CWSN to education. The study established that only 40% of the teachers had completed a degree in special needs and even after training, some teachers go for other jobs. The lack of enough SNE teachers has predetermined that CWSN lack the specialized care they need.

4.4.4 Disability friendly facilities

Almost all teachers 95% and 90% of the children respectively agreed that the absence/presence of disability friendly facilities affect access to pursuit of education. The facilities in question included special latrine facilities, wide walkways, wide corridors and wide doors.

In nine of the eleven schools (87%) observed for this study, the walkways were found to be very well kept and demarcated and devoid of sharp instruments. Some few ramps had been erected in about 50% of the structures especially the new buildings constructed from county funds. Generally the older buildings had no ramps, no wide paved corridors, nor wide doors but the disabled children were still expected to use them. The study did not find a single school with information for the disabled.

4.5 Demographic characteristics

4.5.1 Age of the respondent

In this study, 9% of respondents were aged 14, 31% were aged 15, those aged 16years comprised 35% while those aged 17years comprised 25% as summarized in figure 4.1 below:

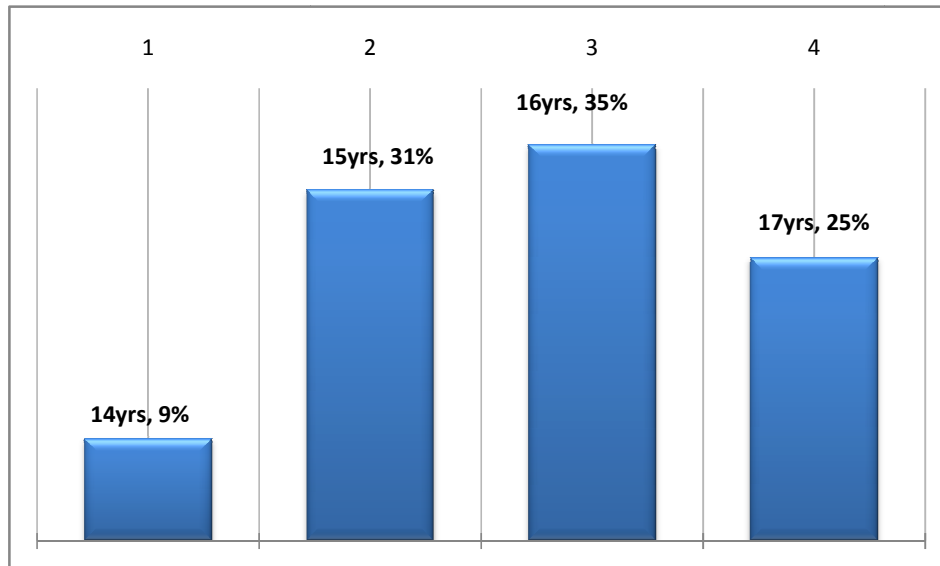


Figure 4.1: Age of the respondents

4.5.2 Education level

In this study, 14% of the respondents reported being in class five, 23% being in class six, 42% reported being in class seven while 21% of the respondents were in class eight. The findings are summarized in figure 4.2 below:

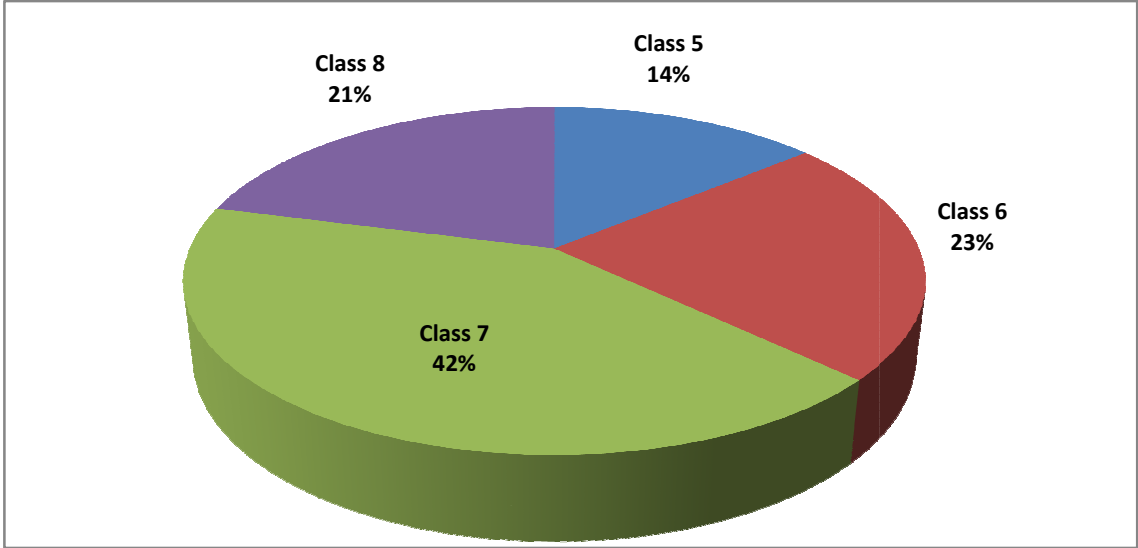


Figure 4.2: Education level of the respondents

CHAPTER FIVE

5.0 SUMMARY, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 Introduction

This study set out to identify the challenges facing children with special needs in pursuing education in Thika Sub-County, Kiambu County. The study also sought to determine the strategies put in place to address challenges facing children with special needs in pursuing education.

The study was guided by Goffman's theory of stigma (1963). The theory states that society brings about stigma which pertains to the shame that a person may feel when he or she fails to meet others and fear of being discredited; which causes the individual not to reveal his or her shortcomings. This section gives a recap of the findings from data collected and presented in the previous section.

5.2 Summary

The study has assessed challenges facing children with special needs in pursuing education. In specific, it assessed economic, social-cultural, policy frameworks and school related challenges facing children with special needs in pursuing education while at the same time examined the strategies put in place to address the challenges facing children with special needs in pursuing education.

Economically, the study identified poverty among household of CWSN is an impending factor towards CWSN pursuit to education. This was well exemplified by an overwhelming 92% of key respondents, concurring to the issues of poverty and

their lamentation of no special arrangements to benefit from ongoing government programmes.

Moreover, with a CWSN the financial demands in relation to educational requirements increase. Similarly the high cost of instructional materials was another deterring factor to CWSN pursuit to education.

Socially, there should be a range of inclusive settings whereby the CWSN can feel included and be best served. Such settings could be arranged within the school premises, family circles, at community gatherings, at sports events, religious services and other recreation centers which are likely to ensure the opportunities for social interaction. It has also been re-confirmed that interest of parents could be a consequence of lack of information.

Sensitization and provision of information could change that perception of CWSN and is believed to impact on their enrolment positively. The real challenge SNE is to meet the special needs of all children with special needs. Inclusion is not a soft process. It requires a lot of struggle and commitment to overcome all types of barriers mainly social-cultural, economic, school related and policy. People have to change their established social-cultural beliefs, practices and modes of working and stop viewing CWSN as failures but as children who can learn as their able bodied counterparts

Many determinant factors affect and regulate the development of SNE. Limited understandings of the concept of disability, negative attitude towards children with special needs and a hardened resistance to change are the major barriers impeding

improvement of SNE. Of particular concern is the fact that parents and teachers attitudes are seen as the decisive factors for successful education system. There no significant influence (positive or negative) of religion on the perception of the public towards the children with special needs in Thika Sub-County, Kiambu County.

This phenomenon also extends to peer relations between CWDs and able-bodied children. Policy frameworks, indeed the government's policy can do a lot affect access to education for CWSN. For a long time the CWSN were excluded from school, but the government embracing of Education for All (FPE) in 2003 opened doors for many CWSN. Although things are not perfect yet, a lot more could be done, this single act of legislation showed that is very instrumental.

Furthermore, government's policy has greatly improved the infrastructure to enable CWSN access education. All the new constructed structures in schools visited for example classroom blocks had rumps which eased the movement of CWSN, clean school compounds were maintained. This means that if the government came up with stringent measures to ensure that policies are implemented then SNE would be a success.

School related, even though, Education for All was ratified by the Kenyan government, the practical implementation is far from desired. The effective participation rate of children with special needs in schools is negligible when compared to the number of their normal counterparts in school age bracket. While they are readily enrolled in special unit and schools, CWSN are

not provided with those special materials and equipment necessary for their effective schooling. These materials , for example: Perkins, Braille, cubes for arithmetic cubartithm board games, thermo form machine, binding and spiral, machine, and mobility cane can be found in some private special schools for CWSN.

The crowding of children in a single room which makes learning more difficult as the teacher finds it extremely difficult to attend individual problems and interests. Children attending special schools and classes include the deaf, the blind and the mentally retarded indeed, practical problems are encountered while including children with diverse educational needs. But often the practical difficulties have more to do with bringing social-cultural change and the reorganization of learning environments and school activities, with the change of policy, reallocation of money and resources than with the needs of children.

However, shortage of special learning materials for CWSN, long breaks taken away from school due to illnesses or corrective surgeries and some inconvenient school infrastructure continue to be obstacles encountered in course of their education.

The researcher can conclude that the objectives of the study questions have been answered. That is to say the socio-cultural, economic, school related and policy framework are at play as major hindrances in pursuing education by children with special needs in Thika Sub-County, Kiambu County.

5.3 Conclusion

In the study, the participants reported a greet interaction between social-cultural, economical, policy framework and school related challenges. The concept of all-

inclusive education means welcoming all children, without discrimination, into regular or ordinary schools. Indeed, it is a focus on creating environments responsive to the differing developmental capacities, needs, and potentials of all children. Inclusion means a shift in services from simply trying to fit the child into 'normal settings'; it is a supplemental support for their disabilities on special needs and promoting the child's overall development in an optimal setting. It calls for respect of difference and diversity of individual characteristics and needs. This has to include a consideration of overall organization, curriculum and classroom practice, support for learning and staff development.

The Salamanca Statement and Framework for Action on Special Needs Education (UNESCO, 1994) provides the clearest and most unequivocal call in articles 2 and 7 towards the inclusive approach. However, basing on this research on the challenges of pursuing education by CWSN in Thika Sub-County, Kiambu County is a combination of school related, socio cultural, economic and policy related factors which can be conclusively adduced as being at play in encumbering successive implementation of the SNE.

5.4 Recommendations

1. Avail more teachers trained in SNE and give them special motivation. The government should include a module on Special needs in the training of all teachers so that they all know what to do.
2. The government should construct special schools resource centers/rooms for CWSN and put children with same disability together.

3. The government should establish special schools and units, per district bringing schools nearer to communities to encourage pursuit of education as some CWSN give up due to the distance from home to school.
4. The government should provide instructional materials like hearing aids, spectacles, elevated shoes, crutches, wheel chairs, text books and teachers guides specifically including teaching guides for teaching CWSN.
5. The government should sensitize parents, caregivers and normal peers as well as teachers through community mobilization and advocacy on the need of CWSN to pursuing education.
6. The government should specially help parents of CWSN to start income generating activities to afford learning materials for their children through provision of special grantor percentage allocation of existing credit facilities as programmes of government.
7. SNE should be made compulsory with penalties for erring parents; the government should put in place legislation that makes schooling CWSN compulsory so that all the children are given an opportunity to pursue education.
8. Parents to escort CWSN to school for those in day schools to show support and encourage them to pursue education.
9. The development of an all-inclusive educational policy, curriculum and teacher training programs should be drafted to act as are frontiers to the challenges encountered in course of implementing SNE.
10. Revision of the current school curriculum and teaching style with a curriculum that is integrated with all the needs of all the beneficiaries. As earlier pointed out the existing curriculum does not integrate the needs of CWSN as the

national curriculum centre needs to design its programme with the needs of CWSN in mind.

11. Special classes should be given for a limited time and should not exceed 60 percent of the school time. The rest of the time should be focused on special skills training (for the blind such as Braille reading and writing and those special mobility drills) as well as providing tutorials for those who need it. The SNE teacher can use the special class as a resource and consultation center for the class parents as well as CWSN.
12. There is need to improve physical structures through construction of ramps, wider classroom doors, adapted toilets so as make education accessible to make the schools disability friendly.
13. Initiating extra-curricular activities in and out of school. Special efforts should be made to involve CWSN in special sports and games. This makes them enjoy school more and feel part of everybody. At the same time it refreshes them and builds their bodies.
14. There is need to involve parents/guardians in deciding the long-term and short-term objectives of the educational programs to be based on not only on the CWSN interest and abilities, but also the families' abilities and priorities this will help them change their negative attitudes.
15. Parents as well as other family members can be sensitized and trained to use special strategies to creating awareness on CWSN that they are capable as normal children in pursuing education and to facilitate and promote the overall development of CWSN during their day-to-day encounters at home.

16. There should also be a legislation that ensures continuous provision of scholastic materials, aids and appliances in all schools as well as a legislation that ensures that the physical school infrastructures are disability friendly.

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APPENDICES

APPENDIX 1:In-depth Interview Guide

In-Depth Interview Guide for Primary School Students

General Information

1.1 Name (optional).....

1.2 Gender (.....) (.....)

1.3 Age (.....)

1.4 Class (.....)

Specific Information

1.What do you understand by the term disability?.....

2. (please say yes if you think the statements below affects you and no if you think it does not affect you).

a) Negative peer influence ()

b) Isolation ()

c) Lack of CWSN specific instructional materials ()

d) Unavailability of teachers trained in SNE ()

e) Lack of disability structures ()

f) Lack of commitment and skill by teachers ()

g) Long distance to school ()

h) Non participation of all stakeholders in policies that affect CWSN ()

i) Others please specify ()

3) Do you have any of the following provisions in your school?

Yes No Don't know

a) Ramps

() () ()

b) Special toilet facilities

() () ()

c) Sign posts

() () ()

d) Disability related information

() () ()

4. Do you hold any meetings with your teachers to discuss the problems above? If yes what

are your views about the discussions?

.....
.....

5. How does the relationship with your fellow peers affect your stay in school?

.....
.....

6. What are some of the challenges that you have while attending school?

.....
.....

7. In your view do the teachers who are trained in SNE enough to address your learning needs?

.....
.....

8. Please mention some of the learning needs that have not been addressed adequately?

.....
.....

9. Are the physical structures here accessible?

.....
.....

10. Can you easily access scholastic materials?

.....
.....

11. What do you like about your school?

.....
.....

12. What don't you like about your school?

.....
.....

THANK YOU

Appendix 2: Key Informant Interview Guide

Interview Guide for Primary School Teachers

General Information

1.1 Name (optional).....

1.2 School(optional).....

1.3 Subject.....

1.4 How long have you been teaching

Specific Information

1. What is your understanding of the term disability?

.....
.....

2. Mentioned below are the different types of disabilities that CWSN suffer from, please tick those that are handled at your institution that you are aware of (Tick as many as applicable):

Types of disability	Tick
a) Hearing Impairment	<input type="checkbox"/>
b) Speech Difficulty	<input type="checkbox"/>
c) Visual Difficulty	<input type="checkbox"/>
d) Learning Difficulty	<input type="checkbox"/>
e) Physical Difficulty	<input type="checkbox"/>
f) Multiple Difficulties	<input type="checkbox"/>
g) Others please mention	<input type="checkbox"/>
h) Socio –Cultural Factors	<input type="checkbox"/>

3. Please indicate whether you agree, disagree or don't know whether the factors listed below are hindrances to CWSN access to education (Your responses are limited to Yes, No or Don't Know):

Factor		Yes	No
Don't Know	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
a) Negative attitude and practices against CWSN	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
b) Negative parental attitude	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
c) Poverty among households of CWSN	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
d) Isolation	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
e) Negative Religious Influence	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
f) High costs of CWSN material and equipment	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
g) Lack of streamed strategies	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
h) Lack of knowledge on existing CWSN policies	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
i) Incomprehensive curriculum to CWSN	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
j) Absence of teachers trained in SNE	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
k) Medical problems	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
l) Negative attitude from peer	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
m) Others (please mention them)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

4. If you agree, how have you handled the challenges and with what results?

Problem	Strategy	Result
a. Sensitization and awareness raising		
b. Improvement of physical structures like construction of ramps		
c. Lobbying various stakeholders on improvement of study curriculum		
d. Special consideration for CWSN with multiple disabilities		
e. Empowerment of education committees at the parish level for efficient monitoring		
f. Ensuring that FPE funds are utilized to benefit CWSN		
g. Revision of curriculum		
h. Poverty reduction strategies being implemented all development initiatives through affirmative action to the CWSNs		
g. Others (Specify)		

5. Apart from the above mentioned problems what other problems do you think face the children with special needs and how have these problems affected access to the educational services by CWSN?

Problem	How it affects access to education

6. Which of the following factors does your school relate to as challenges to access to education for CWSN in your school? (Tick as many as possible)

Factor		Yes	No
Don't know	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
a) Curriculum and teaching style	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
b) Lack of instructional materials	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
c) In availability of teachers trained in SNE	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
d) Lack of commitment and skills among teachers	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
e) Absence of disability friendly structures	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
f) Long distance to school	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
g) Costly CWSN school equipment	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
h) Isolation and negative attitude towards CWSN	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
i) Others (please mention)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

7. In your view what ways if any can parents / caregivers hinder CWSN from accessing all-inclusive educational services?

.....
.....

8. Do you think CWSN have taken advantage of enrolling in FPE as one of the key target groups?

Yes No Don't know

9. Give reasons for your answer

.....

10. How many Special Needs Education (SNE) teachers do you have in your school?

Name of School	No. of Staff	No. of students
.....

b) Do you think the number of teachers is sufficient?

Yes No Don't know

c) If no, what is preventing recruitment?

.....
.....

11. In your view is SNE really all-inclusive?

Yes No Don't know

a) Give reasons for your answer

.....
.....

12. What do you think can be done to improve the following to CWSN?

a) Enrolment.....

b) Retention.....

c) and completion?.....

13. Are you aware of the training that is offered in SNE?

Yes

No

Don't know

a) If yes, do think it meets the educational needs of CWSN?

.....

14. Mention the challenges that you face while instructing CWSN

.....

.....

15. Which laws, if any that enforce accessibility to education services for CWSN are you familiar with?

.....

.....

THANK YOU