

***A PHENOMENOLOGICAL STUDY OF ACCESS TO EDUCATION
FOR LEARNERS LIVING WITH DISABILITY IN KENYA: A
STUDY OF POLICY IMPLEMENTATION AND STRATEGIES IN
SIAYA AND KISUMU COUNTIES***



Fredrick Ochieng Owuor

**A Dissertation Submitted in Partial
Fulfillment of the Requirements for the Degree of
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ABSTRACT

Title of Dissertation	<i>A PHENOMENOLOGICAL STUDY OF ACCESS TO EDUCATION FOR LEARNERS LIVING WITH DISABILITY IN KENYA: A STUDY OF POLICY IMPLEMENTATION AND STRATEGIES IN SIAYA AND KISUMU COUNTIES</i>
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Access to education is a basic human right that every government seeks to guarantee its people. Policymakers in the education sector continue to focus on formulating and implementing policies that ensure that all children have equal chances of accessing quality education regardless of their social, economic, or physical status. However, learners living with a disability are still facing numerous challenges in their quest for education. Well-thought-out policy implementation strategies can assist in ensuring that learners living with a disability access quality education like other children without any challenges. The study sought to determine the factors hindering access to education by learners living with a disability in a case study of Siaya and Kisumu counties in Kenya. The study made reference to theories of policy implementation, namely top-down, bottom-up, and the hybrid approaches. The study adopted a qualitative phenomenological approach in order to understand the individual lived experiences of learners living with a disability in terms of policy implementation. The objectives of the study were: to explore the policy context of students living with a disability; to analyze the factors influencing policy implementation for access to education by students living with a disability; and to recommend strategies for improving access to education for learners living with a disability. Data were collected in 3 schools within 2 counties in Kenya. Three principals, 3 parents, 2 education officers, 9 learners living with a disability, and 18 teachers in 3 focus groups were selected using convenience and purposive sampling techniques. The unit of analysis for this research was the individual. Content review of daily recordings, semi-structured interviews, and focus group interviews were used for the data collection. For the analysis, the study adopted thematic analysis where six stages were followed: (a)

becoming familiar with the data obtained; (b) generating initial codes; (c) identifying emerging themes; (d) reviewing the themes; (e) defining and naming the themes; and (f) producing the report.

The findings revealed that the main factors hindering access to quality education by learners living with a disability included lack of decision-making ability by stakeholders at the grassroots level (teachers, school heads, and county education officers), lack of awareness of the existing support structures for learners living with a disability, lack of parental and peer support, negative cultural beliefs and perceptions about people living with disability, lack of sufficient special facilities and infrastructure in schools, and an unfavorable curriculum. The study recommends the following: policymakers should consider a bottom-up approach or a hybrid approach to decisions involving learners living with a disability, development and implementation of policy to enable research on learners living with disabilities, strict implementation of policies and laws on the discrimination of persons living with disabilities, the government to ensure that schools have sufficient special facilities and supportive infrastructure for learners living with disability, hiring of more trained teachers, review and customization of the curriculum to meet the needs of different types of learners living with a disability, and increasing awareness of disabilities and the existing support systems for learners living with a disability.

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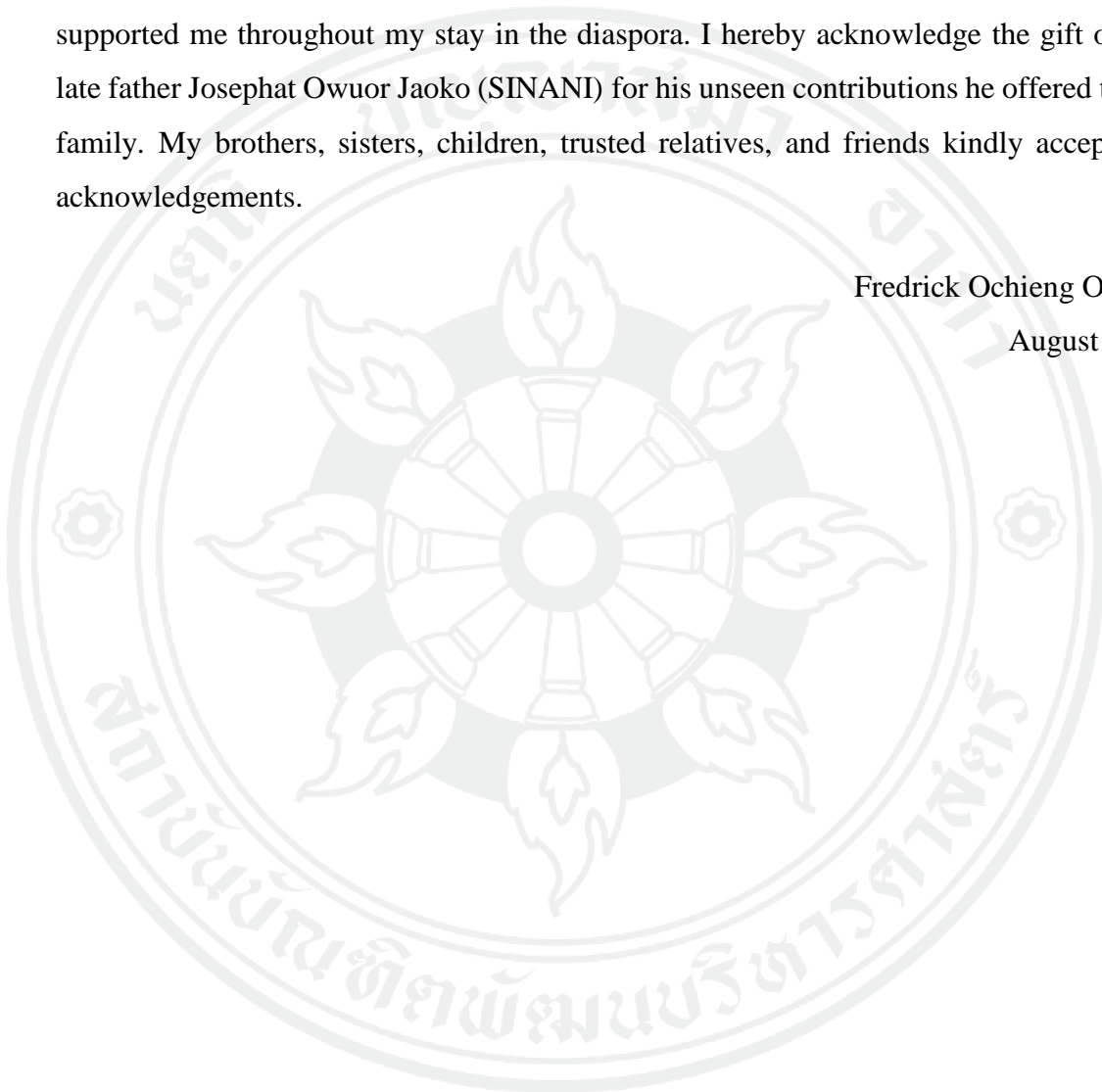


TABLE OF CONTENTS

	Page
ABSTRACT.....	iii
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS.....	v
TABLE OF CONTENTS.....	vii
LIST OF TABLES.....	xv
LIST OF FIGURES.....	xvi
CHAPTER 1 INTRODUCTION.....	1
1.1 Introduction.....	1
1.2 Background.....	1
1.3 The Gaps in the Literature and the Problem Statement.....	2
1.4 Objectives of the Study.....	5
1.5 Research Questions.....	5
1.6 Significance of the Study.....	5
1.7 Scope and Limitations of the Study.....	6
1.8 Meaning of Important Terms in this Study.....	7
1.9 Organization of the Study.....	8
CHAPTER 2 LITERATURE REVIEW.....	10
2.1 Introduction.....	10
2.2 Disability and Access to Education.....	10
2.2.1 Basic Understanding of Education and Access to Education.....	10
2.2.2 Basic Knowledge of Disability and Types.....	11
2.2.3 Disability Policies and Access to the Education Situation in Kenya.....	12
2.3 Relevant Analytic Literature.....	14
2.3.1 Policy Implementation Theories.....	15
2.3.2 The Top-Down Theoretical Viewpoint.....	16
2.3.3 The Bottom-Up Theoretical Viewpoint.....	17

2.3.4 Top-Bottom Approach Implementation theorists.....	18
2.3.5 The bottom-up Implementation Approach	19
2.3.6 Hybrid Policy Implementation Approach	21
2.4 Theories and Models of Disability	21
2.5 Review of Empirical Literature Related to Access to Education by Learners Living with Disabilities in Different Contexts	22
2.5.1 Policies on Access to Education for Disabled Persons from Different Countries	22
2.5.2 Factors Influencing Disability Policy Implementation for Access to Education.....	27
2.5.3 Strategies for Improving Disabled Learners Access to Education.....	30
2.6 Conclusion.....	32
CHAPTER 3 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY	34
3.1 Introduction	34
3.2 Research Paradigm	34
3.3 Interpretive Research Paradigm	35
3.4 Unit of Analysis.....	37
3.4.1 Population of the Study	37
3.4.2 Target Sample.....	37
3.4.3 Research Settings and Research Participants	38
3.4.4 Reasons for Picking the Sample.....	42
3.4.5 Rationale of the Sample and Targeted Population	43
3.5 Data Collection Approach and Method	45
3.5.1 Phenomenological In-depth Interviews and Lived Experiences	45
3.6 Sampling Technique	45
3.7 Data Collection Methods	46
3.7.1 Documentary Research.....	47
3.7.2 Interviews	47
3.7.2.1 Conducting Interviews.....	48
3.7.2.2 Developing the Interview Guide.....	48

3.7.2.3 Audio-Recording of Interviews	49
3.7.2.4 Interview Preparation	49
3.7.2.5 During the Interviews	50
3.7.2.6 Ending the Interviews	50
3.7.3 Focus Group Discussion	50
3.8 Data Analysis	51
3.8.1 Thick Description, Data Transcription and Triangulation	51
3.9 Validity and Reliability	52
3.10 Ethical Considerations	52
3.11 Conclusion	53
CHAPTER 4 LIVED EXPERIENCES OF THE PARTICIPANTS	55
4.1 Introduction	55
4.2 First Group of Participants – Learners Living with Disability	57
4.2.1 Experiences of participant A: Jacky	57
4.2.1.1 Overview of the Participant	57
4.2.1.2 Experiences during Childhood	58
4.2.1.3 Learning Environment and School Life	58
4.2.1.4 Curriculum, Government Participation, and Challenges	60
4.2.2 Experiences of Participant B: John	62
4.2.2.1 Overview of the Participant	62
4.2.2.2 Experiences during Childhood	62
4.2.2.3 Learning Environment and School Life	62
4.2.2.4 Curriculum, Government Participation, and Challenges	63
4.2.3 Experiences of Participant C: Moss	64
4.2.3.1 Overview of the Participant	64
4.2.3.2 Experiences during Childhood	65
4.2.3.3 Learning Environment and School Life	65
4.2.3.4 Curriculum, Government Participation, and Challenges	66
4.2.4 Experiences of Participant D: Norbert	68

4.2.4.1 Overview of the Participant	68
4.2.4.2 Experiences during Childhood	68
4.2.4.3 Learning Environment and School Life	69
4.2.4.4 Curriculum, Government Participation, and Challenges	70
4.2.5 Experiences of Participant E: Edward	71
4.2.5.1 Overview of the Participant	71
4.2.5.2 Experiences during Childhood	71
4.2.5.3 Learning Environment and School Life	72
4.2.5.4 Curriculum, Government Participation, and Challenges	73
4.2.6 Experiences of Participant F: ANITA	74
4.2.6.1 Overview of the Participant	74
4.2.6.2 Experiences during Childhood	74
4.2.6.3 Learning Environment and School Life	75
4.2.6.4 Curriculum, Government Participation, and Challenges	76
4.2.7 Experiences of participant G: MERCY	78
4.2.7.1 Overview of the Participant	78
4.2.7.2 Experiences during Childhood	78
4.2.7.3 Learning Environment and School Life	79
4.2.7.4 Curriculum, Government Participation, and Challenges	80
4.2.8 Experiences of Participant H: STANLEY	80
4.2.8.1 Overview of the Participant	80
4.2.8.2 Experiences during Childhood	81
4.2.8.3 Learning Environment and School Life	81
4.2.8.4 Curriculum, Government Participation, and Challenges	82
4.2.9 Participant I: DAVID	83
4.2.9.1 Overview of the Participant	83
4.2.9.2 Experiences during Childhood	83
4.2.9.3 Learning Environment and School Life	84
4.2.9.4 Curriculum, Government Participation, and Challenges	85

4.3 Second Group of Participants: Parents with Disabled Children in Secondary Schools	87
4.3.1 Participant J: Roko	87
4.3.1.1 Overview of the Participant	87
4.3.1.2 Experiences with His Child	87
4.3.1.3 School and Community Life.....	88
4.3.1.4 Support Acquired and Government Intervention	89
4.3.2 Participant K: Selly	90
4.3.2.1 Overview of the Participant	90
4.3.2.2 Experiences with Her Child.....	90
4.3.2.3 School and Community Life.....	91
4.3.2.4 Support Acquired and Government Intervention	92
4.3.3 Participant L: Lidbro	93
4.3.3.1 Overview of the Participant	93
4.3.3.2 Experiences with Her Child.....	93
4.3.3.3 School and Community Life.....	94
4.3.3.4 Support Acquired and Government Intervention	95
4.4 Third Group of Participants: Special School Principals.....	96
4.4.1 Participant M: Richard	96
4.4.1.1 Participant Overview	96
4.4.1.2 School Management Procedure	97
4.4.1.3 Parents and Community Participation in School Management	98
4.4.1.4 Government Role in the Running of the School.....	99
4.4.2 Participant N: Horrins	100
4.4.2.1 Participant Overview	100
4.4.2.2 School Management Procedure	100
4.4.2.3 Parents and Community Participation in School Management ..	101
4.4.2.4 Government Role in the Running of the School.....	102
4.4.3 Participant O: Jacinta.....	102

4.4.3.1 Participant Overview	102
4.4.3.2 School Management Procedure	103
4.4.3.3 Parents and Community Participation in School Management ..	103
4.4.3.4 Government Role in the Running of Schools.....	104
4.5 Fourth Group of Participants: Education Officers.....	105
4.5.1 Participant P: Mr Otunga.....	105
4.5.1.1 Participant Overview	105
4.5.1.2 Role as an Implementer	106
4.5.1.3 Role of Parents and Other Stakeholders in School Management	106
4.5.1.4 Teachers and Government Activities Regarding Policy Implementation in Schools	107
4.5.2 Participant R: Mr. Oduor.....	108
4.5.2.1 Participant Overview	108
4.5.2.2 Role as an Implementer	109
4.5.2.3 Role of Parents and Other Stakeholders in School Management	110
4.5.2.4 Teachers and Government Activities Regarding Policy Implementation in Schools	110
4.6 Fifth Group of Participants: Focus Group Discussion	112
4.6.1 Participant R: St. George Special School	112
4.6.1.1 Overview, Teachers' Role, Curriculum, and Nature of Students	112
4.6.1.2 Parents' Roles and School Infrastructural Facilities.....	113
4.6.1.3 Government Activities and Challenges in Special Schools.....	114
4.6.2 Participant S; Nico Hauser School for the Blind.....	115
4.6.2.1 Overview, Teachers' Role, Curriculum, and Nature of Students	115
4.6.2.2 Parents' Role and School Infrastructural Facilities	116
4.6.2.3 Government Activities and Challenges in Special Schools.....	116
4.6.3 Participant T: Father Auderaa Secondary School for the Deaf	117

4.6.3.1 Overview, Teachers' Role, Curriculum, and Nature of Students	117
4.6.3.2 Parents' Role and School Infrastructural Facilities	118
4.6.3.3 Government Activities and Challenges in Special Schools.....	119
4.7 Conclusion	120
CHAPTER 5 THEMES AND PARTICIPANTS' IMPRESSIONS OF POLICY IMPLEMENTATION DIRECTIONS	121
5.1 Introduction	121
5.2 A Review of the Themes vs. Existing Laws, Policies, and Procedures	121
5.2.1 Grassroots Decision-Making.....	121
5.2.2 Awareness	122
5.2.3 Cultural Beliefs.....	123
5.2.4 Curriculum.....	124
5.2.5 Environmental and Physical Infrastructure	124
5.2.6 Teacher's Role.....	125
5.2.7 Stakeholders/Government Levels of Authority.....	126
5.2.8 Parental Support	127
5.3 Participants' experiences – A thematic review	128
5.3.1 Decision-making, awareness, and cultural beliefs	128
5.3.2 Curriculum, Environmental Physical Infrastructure, and the Teachers' Role.....	130
5.3.3 Stakeholders/Government Levels of Authority and Parental Support ...	133
5.4 Conclusion.....	134
CHAPTER 6 INTERPRETATION OF THE RESULTS AND SYNTHESIS	136
6.1 Introduction	136
6.2 Decision-Making, Awareness, and Cultural Beliefs	136
6.2.1 Decision-Making	136
6.2.2 Awareness	138
6.2.3 Cultural Beliefs.....	140
6.3 Curriculum, Environmental Physical Infrastructure, and Teachers' Role	141

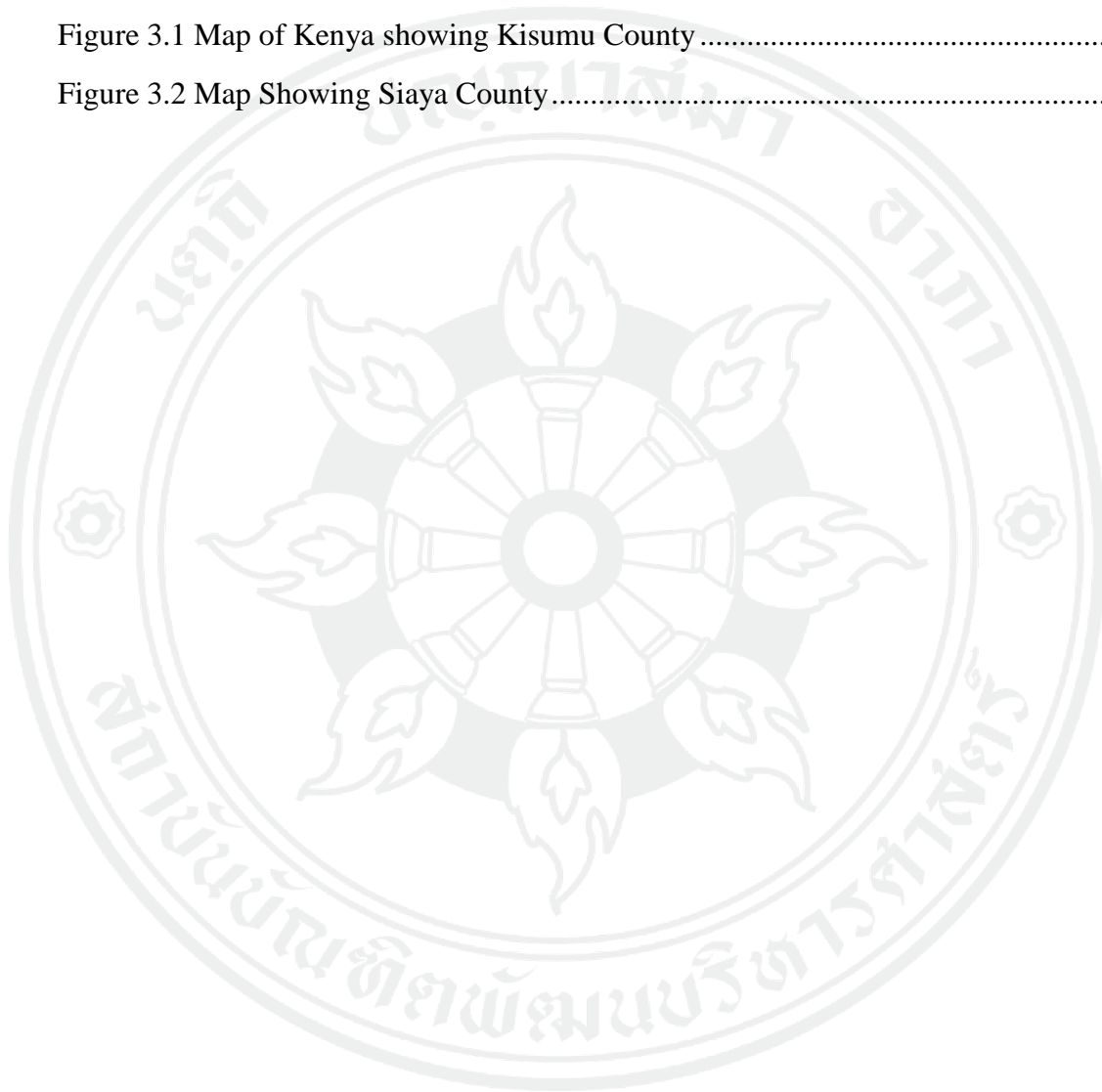
6.3.1 Curriculum.....	141
6.3.2 Environmental and Physical Infrastructure	142
6.3.3 Teachers' Role.....	143
6.4 Stakeholders/Government Intervention and Parental support.....	144
6.4.1 Stakeholders/Government Intervention.....	144
6.4.2 Parental Support	146
6.5 Conclusion.....	146
CHAPTER 7 SUMMARY OF THE FINDINGS, CONCLUSION, AND RECOMMENDATIONS	148
7.1 Introduction	148
7.1.1 Summary of the Findings	148
7.1.2 Conclusion.....	150
7.1.3 Policy Recommendations	151
7.2 Contributions of the Study.....	151
7.3 Recommendations for Further Research	152
BIBLIOGRAPHY	153
APPENDICES	171
Appendix A: Principals Letter	172
Appendix B: Accord for Volunteer Participation	174
Appendix C: Background Data.....	175
Appendix D: Interview Protocol for learners living with disabilities.....	176
Appendix E: Interview Protocol for Principals	177
Appendix F: Interview Protocol for Parents	178
Appendix G: Interview Protocol for Education Officers.....	179
Appendix H: Focus Group for teachers in special schools.....	180
Appendix I: Research Permits	181
BIOGRAPHY	188

LIST OF TABLES

	Page
Table 2.1 Disability types by sex, 2009	14
Table 3.1 showing the study respondents	38
Table 3.2 Research setting	40
Table 3.3 Sample sizes in phenomenological Ph.D. dissertations recently published in selected universities	44
Table 3.4 Sampling Types for Specific Respondents	46
Table 3.5 Numbers of Respondents and Type of Data Collection Site	46
Table 4.1 Research Participants	56
Table 4.2 Visual disable learners views on a sorted theme	68
Table 4.3 Deaf learners' views on a sorted theme	78
Table 4.4 handicap learners' views on a sorted theme	87
Table 4.5 parent of learners living with disability on a sorted theme	96
Table 4.6 Special schools' principals views on a sorted theme	105
Table 4.7 Special schools' education officers' views on a sorted theme	112
Table 4.8 Special schools' principals' views on a sorted theme	120

LIST OF FIGURES

	Page
Figure 3.1 Map of Kenya showing Kisumu County	39
Figure 3.2 Map Showing Siaya County	39



CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Introduction

This chapter presents the background of the study, the gaps in the literature, and the problem statement, the research objectives, the research the questions, significance of the study, and the scope and limitations of the study.

1.2 Background

According to UNESCO 2009, disability status has never been viewed as one of the most compelling factors affecting disabled children in terms of their access to education. This remains a worrisome situation given that education and sequential success are the only ways to revolutionise the plight of these people. Studies by Bardach (1977), Berman (1978) and Bhuyan et al. (2010) have indicated that the way policies are formulated, implemented, and reviewed regularly determines success in any government policy decision.

Access to education refers to the ways in which policies in academic institutions endeavour to ensure that children have equitable opportunities to gain full access to their education (UNESCO, 1990). Access requires learning institutions to provide extra amenities, do away with existing or possible blockages that can prevent some learners from getting an equal chance to take some courses, and even participation in specific academic programs (Najjingo, 2009; Lewin, 2009; Glick, 2008; Lewin, 2008; Sifuna, 2007; Sifuna, 2005 and Shabaya et al., 2004). Despite glaring global attachment to access to education, 58 million children aged 6 to 11 are still not in school, indicating little improvement since 2007 (UNESCO, 2014). Many studies have pointed out factors hindering access to education, including “race, religion, gender, sexual orientation, disability, perceived intellectual ability, past academic performance, special-education

status, English-language ability, and family income”(Burke, 2015; Elward, 2011; Munene and Ruto, 2010; Ramirez, 2009; Shabaya et al., 2004; Karen, 1991).

Other reports and studies have also expressed concern about disability as a setback to education entry and the retention of affected children. The World Health Organization's and World Bank's (2011) and UNISDR's (2014) reports indicate that approximately one billion people in the world are living with disability, with at least 1 in 10 being children. However studies by Moyi (2012) and Crosby (2015) show that the reason for the majority of disabled children not being in schools is because of lack of understanding of their needs by authorities and caretakers.

In Kenya problems hindering disabled learners from access education is viewed by some studies (Mwangi et al., 2014; Harnson, 2013; Wanjiku, 2012; Muchiri and Roberson, 2000) as lack of knowledge in dealing with such children and cultural beliefs. Other studies and reports (Ananga, 2008; Githitho, 2010; Munene and Ruto, 2010; Birger and Craissati, 2009; Sifuna, 2005; Bennett and Mitra, 2011 Ministry of Education Science and Technology, 2005; UNESCO, 2010) claim HIV/AIDS infection, child labour, a pastoral community lifestyle, and children with disabilities as the reasons for the exclusion of children from accessing formal education. In Kenya, 2009 census report however, indicated that 1.9 million children representing 23% were still unable to access education in Kenya. Accessing education on the part of disabled school-age children remains a major factor that presents itself in various forms, and serious attention to policy implementation needs to be considered, implementation theories, and studies (Allison, 1971; Bardach, 1977; Aron and Loprest, 2012; Villenas, 2014; Lauren.and Eleano, 2015; Lipsky, 2009; Lipsky, 2010; SinMing, 2016) can assist in making informed decisions on how to alleviate this problem in Kenya.

1.3 The Gaps in the Literature and the Problem Statement

Education is vital to the development of people in society, and therefore ensuring the right to education for persons with disabilities should not be taken lightly. In many cases inequality and discrimination in education have been major concerns (Mwangi et al., 2014; Harrison, 2013; Caleb, 2000; Burnett, 2008) have noted that

disabled children are not acknowledged and are treated differently from non-disabled children in society, and this affects their schooling beginning with kindergarten.

It is however impressive that UNICEF (2015), UNESCO (2016) and World Bank (2015) reports have indicated some positive results for non-disabled children- school enrolment and literacy rates have risen in almost all countries to date, but this was not the same for disabled children. ICEVI (2006) and UNESCO (2010) reports indicated that approximately 97 percent of disabled children do not have basic reading or writing skills. Further, reports (World Health Organization and World Bank, 2011; World Bank, 2011) observe few children with disabilities in developing countries are in schools, and indicated lack of inclusive school setups for physical, emotional, deaf, and learning impairments. This is a serious concern given that approximately one billion people in the world are living with a disability, accounting for 15%, with at least 1 in 10 being children and 80% of that population living in developing countries such as Kenya.

The data in view of disabled learners accessing education and with respect to agenda 4 (SDG 4) of Sustainable Development Goals “ensure[s] inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all”. A lot more needs to be done specifically in research on education for those left out due to some form of marginalisation, and we need to know exactly where the problem is. Studies (Jennifer, 2017; Vincent 2016; Elaine, 2015; Renee, 2015; Elsie, 2015; Lori, 2014; Maria 2013; Jamir, 2013; Kathleen, 2007; Johnm 1998; Thomas, 2013) The present study on access to education by learners living with disability makes a contribution to the developing world perspective, as developing countries such as Kenya have always been left out in previous studies.

Most of the studies on access to education for learners living with disability in Kenya, for example, those of Mwangi et al. (2014) and Harrison (2013), used disability theories only to come out with factors such as socio-cultural values, lack of teachers’ know-how, and poor facilitation by the government as major factors affecting access to education. None of the studies have looked at challenges with respect to policy implementation with regards to theories. Other studies, for example those of Katherine (2016) and Santa (2015), have also observed disability education through the lens of disability theories, highlighting negative perceptions, and have identified cultural

patterns practiced at household and community levels, culminating in stigmatization as a hinderance to their access.

The challenges facing learners living with disability in Kenya were recognized in policy as early as 1964 when the Ominde commission made a recommendation which allowed for education and training for the disabled (RoK, 1964; Eshiwani, 1993; Kochung, 2003). However, it was the 2010 constitution that made issues of minorities, including people living with a disability, a constitutional imperative (RoK, 2010). These policies seem not to have fully benefited Kenyans, given the fact that a lot more disabled learners are out of school. There is need to find the loopholes for adjustment purposes, and to study policy implementation that can remedy these problems.

While going through most of the studies done on disabilities with regard to access (Gail, 2004; Wendy, 2008; Alliston, 2010; Chandinie, 2012; Villenas, 2014; Santa, 2015; Katherine, 2016; Smith, 2014), all of them used either a mixed or quantitative method to analyse the data. This study used a qualitative approach, specifically an interpretative epistemic paradigm, to bring out the perceptions, attitudes, and beliefs of the participants' lived experiences. It is important to note though that, qualitative studies by Lucianna (2015), Nathan (2011), Fritton (2009), Peterson (2016) and Theodoto (2016) on disability education are all on the developed world context, and this study however provides a developing world vantage point in Kenya after 2010 constitutional review.

Much of the information about students living with disability in Kenya comes from government reports, as well as international conventions and reports. In addition limited studies, for instance those of Muthili (2010), Somerset (2011), Harnson (2013), and Mwangi et al. (2014) have highlighted the challenges that students living with disability in Kenya face. These studies recognize the reality of having a disability within our society and the need for the government to respond to the difficulties that comes with it. However, one, these studies are not conclusive since the context of Kenya is diverse. This diversity implies context-specific requirements which are always missed out in policy decision-making, and two, these studies did not explore the perspective of the people living with a disability. This is because they make generalized inferences from a range of government or non-governmental records rather than actual studies focusing on the lived experiences of students living with disability.

In this regard, little is known about what happens when students with a disability seek an education. Understanding the challenges that students living with a disability face regarding access to education, particularly from the immediate care giver, and their own perspective, can provide a unique view that can inform policy changes which are more receptive to the real needs of the affected students. Therefore, this study analyses the factors that influence policy implementation for access to education among students living with disability.

1.4 Objectives of the Study

1. To explore the policy context of students living with disability in Kenya with respect to Siaya and Kisumu Counties
2. To analyse the factors influencing policy implementation for access to education among students living with disability in Kenya's Siaya and Kisumu Counties.
3. To recommend strategies for access to education for learners living with disability in Siaya and Kisumu Counties in Kenya.

1.5 Research Questions

1. What is the policy context of students living with disability in Kenya with respect to Siaya and Kisumu counties?
2. What factors influence policy implementation for access to education among students living with disability in Kenya's Siaya and Kisumu counties?
3. Which strategies can be recommended for access to education for learners living with disability in Siaya and Kisumu counties in Kenya?

1.6 Significance of the Study

Sustainable development goals (SDGs) recognize all forms of discrimination, inequality and poverty as priority agenda for the next fifteen years. More than before,

strategies to address these issues require that governance and institutional mechanisms at local, national, regional and international levels be more responsive to such needs enlisted in the priority agenda. Disability is therefore an international public good that requires priority attention from government and non-governmental actors. This is because 10% of the world's population are disabled. The analysis of Kenya's education policy indicates a universal application of policy without focus on context-specific challenges that are unique to places, groups, or sectors of society. Often when this is done, marginalized groups or places benefit less from policy, or are largely left out of the policy process, and in the end, this leads to an increase in inequality.

By focusing on three special schools and the challenging contexts within which students living with disability live and study, this study brings to light experiences from which insights can be drawn to develop responsive needs-based policies that can be applied to or inform similar policy situations elsewhere. This study sought to add the voice of students living with disability, parents of the same, and teachers and education officers to the discussion on reforming the education in Kenya in response to the new constitution and the SDGs that binds Kenya to international obligations as per the provisions of the new constitution (RoK, 2010). This is a perspective that has not been captured in previous studies.

Equally, the study provides insight into the possible reasons why these learners are unable to access education with regards to their own experiences. The results of this research will help children that are disabled in four different ways: (1) envision new options for policymakers to adopt;; (2) come up with new ideas that non-governmental organizations and other stakeholders can rely on; (3) it will also be used as a resource base for practitioners to decide on priority requirement; and (4) school administrators will use the information from this research to improve on their planning.

1.7 Scope and Limitations of the Study

The research was limited to the perspective of four categories of participants in three special schools, namely: (1) parents; (2) teachers/principals of the schools; (3) education officers; and (4) students living with disability. The scope was limited to three schools because of time and resources. Phenomenological studies require an in-

depth analysis and focus that would take more time and resources if more schools were involved and so this study was limited to three schools for easy access. Issues related to disability are sensitive matters, whose data can be difficult to find without access to participants. Additionally, qualitative research is as much about relationships as it is about the research itself. As a result, the study focused on the schools where the researcher had access to the participants. The findings of this research cannot be generalized to the whole population living with disability but provides a “slice” of the unique issues that policymakers and practitioners miss out on regarding policy adoption and that are required for the design of needs-based policies and the development of special programs for students living with disability.

1.8 Meaning of Important Terms in this Study

Education: Is attainment of required knowledge to make one literate, this includes getting essential skills, and morals for full contribution in civilization.

Access to Education: How “easy” or “difficult” it is entry to formal learning institution by learner living with disabilities.

Disability: Human impairment which has lasted for over six months and can affect ones’ mobility, vision, hearing which can stop one from active daily life participation.

Inclusive Education: Is a type of learning where able and disable learners are getting education in the same school given enabling facilities for all learners.

Learners Living with Disability: Can be considered as whoever child acquiring education but has difficulty to access education without any improved devise or facilitation.

Policy: Is an action approved and followed by a government, leader, political party, learning institution etc. Can be act or practice compliant to or considered with reference to expediency.

Policy Implementation: Is procedure of putting ideas into action for realization of the development in prioritized.

Policy Strategy: Is a unique plan designed with an aim of achieving current and future guideline, rules, and procedures ministry of education has establish to enhance access to education by learners living with disability.

Visual Disability: An impairment that involves an individual inability to use his sight properly. It includes both partial sight and blindness problems

Hearing Disability: Total inability to hear or partial can be deaf.

Speech Disability: A difficulty in speaking caused by nervousness or by a physical problem.

Deaf: Lack of ability to hear.

Deaf and Mute: Is a term used to refer to someone who cannot speak or hear.

Physical Disability: Is the incapacity to function normally caused by a body defect or injury.

Mental Disability: More related to abnormal neurological problems, can cause intellectual handicap, which can result directly or indirectly to injury to brain or abnormal neurological development.

Albinos: Hereditary inability Pale skinned light hair with pinkish eyes person usually develop visual abnormalities.

1.9 Organization of the Study

The dissertation is arranged in seven sections from chapter one to seven.

Chapter 1: The chapter discusses the background of the study, the gaps in literature and the problem statement, the research objectives, the research questions, the significance of the study, the scope and the limitation of the study.

Chapter 2: The chapter reviews the relevant literature related to the study, it gives an overview of; - what education is and access to education; the meaning of disability and types of prevalent disabilities found in Kenya schools. The chapter also review empirical literature as per the study objectives. Finally, the chapter emphasized on implementation theories and model and briefly singles disability theories/models.

Chapter 3: This chapter deals with methodology and general design, it explains how the research was conducted by explaining research paradigm, the unit of analysis, the

sampling strategy, the data collection and analyses strategies. It also gives a brief explanation of validity and reliability of the study and the ethical issues considerations.

Chapter 4: This chapter presents the qualitative analyses of the collected data. The analyses were carried out following data collected from the field. Various themes emerged with respect to different types of respondent experiences.

Chapter 5: This section describes the themes and participation impression on policy. It critically assesses the themes identified in chapter four. The impression discussed sets room for interpretation and analysis.

Chapter 6: This chapter presents the interpretation of the result and synthesis of the various themes isolated and discussed in chapter four and five with tight references to chapter two.

Chapter 7: This is the final section of the study; it provides general summary of the findings, conclusion, and recommendations. Equally it makes suggestion for further research areas.

CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Introduction

This section presents the reviewed literature of the main variables forming the study, specifically education and access, disability and learners living with disability, types of disability and their occurrence in Kenya, theory/models, and then a brief examination of the empirical study as per the study objectives.

2.2 Disability and Access to Education

For a proper understanding of this study, a summary of the various concepts used regarding the meaning of education, access to education, the meaning of the disability types, and statistical records on disability is captured.

2.2.1 Basic Understanding of Education and Access to Education

The importance of education in the socio-economic development of Kenya and indeed all nations cannot be under-emphasized. In its broadest sense, education is indispensable for the building and sustenance of a modern nation state. It prepares enlightened citizens capable of communicating among themselves at an intelligent level, thus making it possible for them to work out their social and economic relationships. Education is, in fact, a necessary ingredient for national unity, stability and development, for it not only prepares an individual citizen for living and personal fulfilment, but also makes it possible to contribute effectively to development (Sifuna, 2005; Mwangi et al., 2014; UNESCO, 2014).

UNESCO (2014) and UNESCO (2009) described education as a mean of acquiring essential knowledge, skills and values the society needs to participate in civilization. NCCA (1999) and Rosado (2000) found that education contributes for physical, mental, moral, and spiritual development. UNESCO (2015) and UNESCO

(2017) discuss that quality learning for human development is purposed for the following reasons; one is learning to know, two is learning to be, three is learning to live together, four is learning to do, and five is learning to transform oneself and society for the purpose of sustainable development.

Access to education refers to how “easy” or “difficult” it is to enter into formal learning institutions to acquire knowledge, including skills and the values that society wants. Sifuna (2005), Lewin (2009), and Shabaya and Konadu-Agyemang (2004) observed the term access to education in the context of 1948, Article 26 of the universal declaration of human rights requirements, which states that “everyone has the right to education and education shall be free at least in the elementary and fundamental stages”. UNESCO (2010), Githitho-Muriithi (2010) and Sifuna (2007) also views the term to be derived within the context of the 1990 Jomtien conference, world declaration on “Education for All” (EFA).

Access to education for learners living with disability goes beyond just how “easy” or “difficult” it is to enter formal learning institutions but includes ensuring proper delivery of their requirements, stretching from home, schools, to other areas of their needs (NCCA, 1999; Muchiri and Roberson, 2000). Donald (2008), Alkire et al. (2015) and GPE Board (2012) clarified that educational provision makes it easy for learners of various needs to develop their talent spontaneously.

In Kenya the enrolment of the disabled in educational institutions is still very low. According to statistical figures (RoK, 2007), there were 23, 459 pupils with special needs and disabilities enrolled in primary and secondary schools in 2003; however in 2006 there were 98 special primary schools, with 1341 special units, 7 special secondary schools, and 4 special technical training institutes with a total enrolment of 36,239 disabled learners enrolled.

2.2.2 Basic Knowledge of Disability and Types

Disability presents itself in different ways; it can be mobility problems, mental, hearing, and vision health conditions. Some forms of disabilities incorporate many other disabilities (KNSPWD, 2007; Renee, 2015; Guernsey et al., 2007). KNSPWD (2007) further reports that, for one to be considered disabled, the symptom of the disability should prevail for at least six months. Also a reports by the World Health Organization (1976) and a study by Nkinyangi and Mbindyo (1982) observed disability

by drawing three distinctions; impairment, disability, and being handicapped. However studies (Siebers, 2005; Ploy, 2006; Kaplan, 2000; Hiranandani, 2005; Sherry, 2006; Daniel et al., 2015; Clare, 2013; Nair, 2014; Russell, 2018) looked at disability in relation to social factors and viewed disability as socially imposed restrictions on those with impairment because of the discriminatory practices attached to them by the society.

Kenya studies (Adoyo, 2007; Kennison, 2015; Wachianga et al., 2015; Devries et al., 2014) and reports from the WHO (1980) and KNSPWD (2007) revealed that general disabilities were being visually impaired/blind or partially blind, having hearing problems or being deaf, speech disorders/speech impediments/mute, physical impairments, and mental disability and others, including being albino. Information from Kenya Association for the Blind (2017), KNSPWD (2007), Kiarie (2014), Mbaluka (2012) and Ndurumo (2001) highlight the attention given to a specific type of disability depending on magnitude and policy attachment, and some even have their organizations to battle for their rights.

2.2.3 Disability Policies and Access to the Education Situation in Kenya

Policies framework on disability education began in Kenya in 1964 after independence, when the government formed a committee on the care and rehabilitation of the disabled, and the result was sectional paper No. 5 of 1968, which recommended that children with mild handicaps be integrated to learn in regular schools. In 1976 commission was formed, the national commission on education. This commission recommended various issues in support of disabled children's access to education; coordination of early intervention and assessment of children with special needs; the creation of public awareness on the causes of disabilities to promote prevention; research to determine the nature and extent of handicaps for the provision of special needs education (SNE); and the establishment of early child development education (ECDE) programs as part of special schools. Other policy frameworks followed the 1976 commission: the presidential working committee on education and training for the next decade and beyond; and the commission of enquiry into education systems, and the Task Force on Special Needs Education (RoK, 1964; RoK, 1964; RoK, 1976; Kamunge, 1988, RoK, 1999; Kochung, 2003).

Apart from those policy developments in support of education for the disabled, Kenya has come up with other policies such as children policy, disability policy, basic education policy, infrastructural policy, and constitutional change 2010. All these were aimed at supporting disabled people, more so children. The most notable agenda of those policies are “no pupil shall be refused admission to, or excluded from, the school on any grounds of sex, race or colour or on any other than reasonable grounds” (Republic of Kenya, 2001; Government of Kenya, 2013; Government of Kenya, 2003; Republic of Kenya, 2005b).

The constitution of Kenya 2010 Article 43 (1) (f) states that education is not just a vital right of children but a central tool for sustained socio-economic development and an important way to exit poverty. This goes along with reaffirming a global framework that all persons with any type of disability are entitled to fundamental freedoms and human rights (Republic of Kenya, 2005; United Nations 2006; RoK, 2010; UNESCO, 2013). In the same Kenya constitution 2010, Articles 53, 54, 55, 56, 57, and 59 emphasize the provision of free and compulsory basic education for all children as their basic right, and emphasis on the promotion of Kenyan sign language, braille and other communication formats and technologies accessible to persons with disabilities. In an attempt to realise the constitution requirement on disability, the Kenya government has formulated gender policy which stresses increased participation, retention and completion for learners with special needs and disabilities by providing an enabling environment, creating flexible curricula, training personnel, and the provision of equipment. Further, the constitution stressed much on disabled learners to be provided with required facilities that are accommodative since physical infrastructure is important for them to learn (RoK, 2010; Republic of Kenya, 2011; Republic of Kenya, 2013).

Several sections in the constitution assign a great deal of priority to people living with a disability, particularly in relation to access to education. In terms of the environment, the constitution empowers public work to come up with architectural infrastructure, apparatus and equipment which ease the movement in all buildings for disabled people. Regarding sports, the constitution empowers people living with a disability free access to recreation and sports in government-owned institutions. Regarding health the constitution has forged the formation of disability mainstreaming

teams, disability medical assessment committees, and the development of assessment tools for guiding the communities, reporting and categorizing PWDs according to their types of disability. In terms of curricula, the constitution empowers the Ministry of Education to adapt curriculum materials that meet the needs of learners with disabilities in primary and secondary schools. The Kenya National Examination Council (KNEC) has also been called upon to put in place appropriate measures to cater to the needs of different disability groups when setting and administering national examinations (RoK, 2010; Republic of Kenya, 2013).

So far, the government according to the 2009 census has identified 1,330,312 disable persons. Table 1 illustrates the forms of disability according to gender.

Table 2.1 Disability Types by Sex, 2009

Disability	Males	Females	Total
Visual	153,783	177,811	331,594
Hearing	89,840	97,978	187,818
Speech	86,783	75,020	161,803
Physical	198,071	215,627	413,698
Mental	75,139	60,954	136,093
Others	44,073	55,233	99,306
Total	647,689	682,623	1,330,312
% With Disability	3.4	3.5	3.5

Source: Kenya Population Census 2009 (KNBS)

The report on the access to education by learners living with disability is not well established; however, according to reports from the NCAPD and KNBS (2008) and GoK (2009), 67% of all disabled children are in primary school, while 19% are in secondary school, and a mere 2% in tertiary education and university.

2.3 Relevant Analytic Literature

The theories used to frame this study are mostly from the policy implementation field; namely, top-down, bottom-up and, hybrid approaches. These theories are

identified as core to understanding policy implementers' contributions in relation to access to education by learners living with a disability. The study borrowed heavily from many scholars that have advanced these theories to make these approaches clear. Disability-related theories are also mentioned.

2.3.1 Policy Implementation Theories

The discussion of policy implementation is not complete without prior knowledge of what policy is in relation to policy implementation. R. E. Elmore (1978) described public policy as a sequence or design of government actions or verdicts designed to remedy specific social problems. On their part, Palumbo and Calista (1990) observed that public policy is a focused course of action design by the government for a person or a group of people to follow in dealing with a problem or matter of concern. They added that the success of any public policy is usually positively correlated with how it is executed, as such public policy needs to be well implemented for the citizen to gain from the program. Further they mentioned that policy implementation is a part of the policy cycle, which is concerned with the way government executes and satisfies a specific assignment. Many more studies (Hill and Hupe, 2002; Meter and Van, 1975; Howlett et al., 1995) expressed the same view-that policy implementation can manifest itself in different arrangements depending on the societal culture and institution background.

Other studies (Pressman and Wildavsky, 1973) viewed implementation as a technique where set goals and actions interact for a purpose. Mazmanian and Sabatier (1983) regard policy implementation as a way of carrying out elementary policy decisions typically merged in an act, or in important executive orders or court verdicts. Meier and O'Toole, Jr. (2003) however looked at policy implementation as what comes out of the government's intention and the impact it causes. On his part, Elmore (1978) provided four complements for effective implementation: (1) clear tasks and objectives; (2) a proper management plan; (3) an objective way of measuring subunit performance; and (4) a system of management controls and social sanctions. He added that implementation fails because of lapses in planning, specifications, and control.

Another scholar, Lasswell (1970), argued that policy implementation can be administered according to seven stages: intelligence, promotion, prescription, innovation, application, termination, and appraisal. Dye (2012) however summed the

idea of policy implementation as an idea that involves activities to make policy achieve what legislators have enacted. In whole policy implementation is a very important stage in the policymaking process since the whole implication of it is the execution of laws, where many stakeholders and institutions work as a team with the help of procedures and techniques to make sure that policies achieve their intended goals (Pressman and Wildavsky, 1973; Stewart et al., 2008).

While looking at policy implementation theory, Wacker (1998) and McCool (1995) argued that tracing exactly what policy implementation theory is can be a tall order given that a good theory needs to have the following characteristics: be unique, parsimonious, possess conservativity, generalizability, prolificacy, consistency, empirical riskiness, and noted policy theory is unlikely to have all of these and may end up having no outstanding theory. Goggin et al. (1990) however observed that policy implementation has gained from classical theories over the duration of time resulting in different theoretical models and approaches commonly applied, referred to as top-down and bottom-up theories. This idea was later supported by Stewart (2008).

2.3.2 The Top-Down Theoretical Viewpoint

This perspective assumes that policy goals can be stated by policymakers, and implementation can be carried out given certain mechanisms, emphasizing the role of the policymaker as the one with overall authority and control over the environment (Palumbo et al., 1990; Younis, 1990; Van and Horn, 1975). Mazmanian and Sabatier's (1989) study concurred with earlier studies by Pressman and Wildavsky (1973), which argued that the success of policy implementation depends on the actions and feelings of executing officers and the target groups in response to goals enlisted in an authoritative decision. Hogwood and Gunn (1984) while supporting the same, went further to enlist the characteristics of the top-down theoretical perspective to include the following ideas: policy decisions are made by policymakers, and their starting point is usually statutory language, where the structure is very formal; the process is purely administrative, authority is centralised, outputs/outcomes are prescriptive, and discretions are made by top-level bureaucracy.

In another study Matland (1995) observed that the top-down approach focused on the official navigation of problems and factors, which are easy to operate and lead to centralization and control. Elmore (1978) observed that the operation of the top-

down approach focused on funding formulas, formal organization structures, and authority relationships between administrative units, regulations, and administrative controls such as budget, planning, and evaluation requirements. Equally, Winter (1990) claimed that the top-down approach relied more on political decisions, laws, followed implementation through the system, and advice was geared towards how to structure the implementation process to achieve the purpose of legislation.

2.3.3 The Bottom-Up Theoretical Viewpoint

The creators of this theory found that it dwells on both formal and non-formal relationships in making and implementing policy. Howlett (1995) observes that this concept resonates well with the societal needs more so when it comes to individual contributions to implementation. In his own studies and with coining the term street-level bureaucracy, Lipsky (2009) and Lipsky (2010) contributed heavily to this theoretical approach. He felt that this approach was suitable enough to support field workers to be flexible while making a verdict in relation to individual citizens needs when delivering policies to them. Hogwood and Gunn (1984), while contributing on the bottom-up approach, identified the following attributes: (1) the policy decision-maker is a street-level bureaucrat; (2) the starting point in policy formulation is social problems; (3) the structure of policy implementation is both formal and informal; (4) the process of policy implementation is done through networking, including administrative; (5) the authority for policy implementation is decentralization; (6) the output/outcome of policy is descriptive; and (7) the discretion in policy implementation is bottom-level bureaucrats. Other scholars Elmore (1978) and Winter (2003) have noted that the discretionary role of bottom-level bureaucrats is challenging, more so as essential actors in implementing public policy there is a need to ascertain where the options are concentrated, and which organization's repertoire of routines needs to be changed. Hjern and Hull (1981) study supported the bottom-up idea of networking as a process, given the fact that the approach accommodates many actors and analyses, including many policies. Hjern and Hull were, however, concerned with the manner of identifying networks and suggested the snowball and socio-metric methods. Matland (1995) however elaborated that program success majorly depends on the skills of the individual regarding the local implementation structure given that central initiatives are not well adapted to local conditions.

2.3.4 Top-Bottom Approach Implementation theorists

Jeffrey Pressman and Aaron Wildavsky

Two researchers are honoured as the major contributors of implementation studies and are to be known theorists inclined toward top-bottom approach (Goggin et al., 1990; Parsons, 1995; Ryan, 1995). They claimed that the practice of implementing policy needs to follow strict relationships as laid down in official documents, supported by the idea of linkages at all levels. They further came up with the idea of implementation deficits (implementation to be analysed mathematically) to achieve goals.

Donald Van Meter and Carl Van Horn

Their contribution of the top-bottom approach was informed by the works of (Pressman and Wildavsky, 1973; Kaufman, 1960; Bailey and Edith, 1968; Derthick, 1970; Derthick, 1972; Berke et al., 1972). Their theoretical perspective considers the importance of classifying policies according to the areas that implementers might find difficult. To do this, they suggested considering the impacts that will have direct benefit to the affected group, the level of consensus, and noted that implementation will be successful only if marginal change is required and goal consensus is high. Van and Horn (1975) observed the importance of conducting a longitudinal approach in implementation, arguing for its support for identification of relationship at one point in time. Also, they identified the following variables in order to characterise policy implementation: policy standards and objectives; resources and incentives; the quality of inter-organizational relationships; the characteristics of the implementation agencies; the economic, social and political environment; and disposition (Van and Horn, 1975)

Eugene Bardach

His writing gives an influential path towards top-bottom advocates, and he argued that implementation is a “political” process that requires follow through from top to bottom. Bardach explains the need to deal with agents informally since they can only be brought together when collaboration is required given their committed to work in a form of structure. He further argued that implementation should be looked at as a game. Bardach was more concerned with the top and advised policymakers: (1) to care a lot when coming up with a scenario writing process, (2) to use policy while fixing the game, (3) to remove everyday difficulties in change, and (4) to influence appointments

and promote more legislation where need be (Bardach, 1977; Hill Michael and Peter Hupe, 2002).

Paul Sabatier and Daniel Mazmanian

In their writings the two authors looked at the fundamental aspects of policy implementation from the view of the top-down approach, including policy decisions, objectives, and impact consistency; the principal factors affecting output and outcomes; and policy formulation according to experience. Sabatier further exposed the factors impacting the policy implementation process as (1) manageability of the problems in an organization; (2) lack of statutory variables affecting implementations; and (3) lack of capacity of the statute to structure implementation (Mazmanian and Sabatier, 1989; Mazmanian and Sabatier, 1983).

Brian Hogwood and Lewis Gunn

The host of assessments of policy implementation ideas from these two researchers come from a lecture to civil servants by Gunn in 1978, and also from their book titled *Policy Analysis for the Real World* 1984. They claimed that those that make policy are democratically elected and the recommendations that they gave to policymakers to make implementations successful were the following: not to impose crippling constraints but only to get following support; provide adequate time and enough resources; each stage in the implementation process requires a combination of resources; policy should be implemented based on a grounded theory; cause and effect relations must be direct with minimal intervening links; there should be a single implementing agency with no support from others; there should be proper understanding of the objectives, and perfect communication and coordination, obedience to those in authority. Their argument also borrows from Christopher Hood (1976), who claimed that the only way to solve implementation problems is by instituting perfect administration to assist with the management of resources available and with politics (Hogwood and Gunn, 1984)

2.3.5 The bottom-up Implementation Approach

Michael Lipsky:

His work remains a landmark of the bottom-up theoretical concept, and he did a lot of work on the behaviour of front-line staff in policy delivery, which he referred

to as street-level bureaucrats. In one of his writings with others, he supported the political right's argument over avoidance of capacity suppliers to control public monopoly services as a market solution concerning distribution problems. His many studies made him make the following observations: street-level bureaucrats' duties are routines which are self-initiated, and they plan strategies to handle uncertainties and work pressures to implement public policy. He further added that the role of street-level bureaucrats in policy implementation did not involve the advancement of ideals but processes that were more practical. Lipsy (2009) argued that street-level bureaucrats adjust to work requirements, spend their work lives in service, believe themselves to be doing the best, and develop conceptions of their work and of their clients. He however noted workers' classical features of alienation to include the following: work is only on the segments of the products they don't control; no control over outcome or raw materials; no control over pace of work. Lipsy (2010) further stated that street-level bureaucrats face challenges of uncertainty about what personal resources are necessary for their job, and pressure of inadequate time in relation to the many needs expected from them (Lipsky, 2009; Lipsky, 2010).

Benny Hjern:

Hjern (1982) observed that policy implementation depended on the relations between several different organizations and emphasized networks as key to the bottom-up application and advocated for structural formation to be within the pools of establishment. He is well-known for advocating the need for consensual self-selection in the bottom-up approach as more effective in policy implementation format rather than total control, Hjern observed the need to establish new mechanisms of accountability linking street-level bureaucrats and the public (Hjern, 1982).

Susan Barrett and Colin Fudge:

Susan Barrett and Colin Fudge (1980) joined the bottom-up policy implementation debate and supported Hjern's idea on the implementation structure approach that allows compromise between people within an organization in relation to each person's role. Susan and Colin (1981) opined that good policy needs to be reviewed and mediated by actors through mediation and modification to make it friendlier for implementation. The two theorists were concerned with how effectiveness or compromises were being assessed before an objective was rendered useless with no

reference to policy. Finally, they observed implementation to be more policy-action oriented

2.3.6 Hybrid Policy Implementation Approach

More concern about how policy implementation can be successful has captured another vital approach refer to as hybrid; which aims at informing how outcomes of implementation can influence the central and local level (Goggin et al., 1990). This approach is more scientific than the other two. It places more emphasis on operationalization and the testing of hypotheses (Pulz and Treib, 2007). Above all it focuses on five self-explaining models to approach implementation performance, namely, rational, management, organization development, bureaucratic, and political.

Relevant hypotheses have been formulated for each model with related variables. The rational model advocates for clarity of policy goals, targets and objectives, accurate and consistent planning, clear and detailed task assignments, accurate standardisation, and proper monitoring. Management model accommodates the following variables: sufficient and effective use of budget, right organizational structure, quick, clear and two ways communication, involvement of people as co-producers, adequate equipment, appropriate technology, and correct location. The organizational development model is concerned with; effective leadership, motivation, the engagement of people, team building, and accuracy of decisions. The bureaucratic model on the other hand advocates for; proper discretion of front line implementers, competency of front line implementers, control of the behaviour of front line implementers, and commitment of front line implementers. And finally the political model is concerned with variables such as avoiding the complexity of joint action, higher bargaining capacity, harmony among political actors, active political motivation, and minimizing the influence of pressure politics (Pulz and Treib, 2007; Chandarasorn, 2005; Brinkerhoff and Crosby, 2002; Anisur Rahman Khan, 2016).

2.4 Theories and Models of Disability

Disability theories was also important to this study since the content of; social model of disability; cultural context of disability; moral model of disability; educational sub-model; medical model of disability; international classification of functioning

(ICF); spectrum model of disability, tragedy/ charity model of disability and rehabilitation model are discussed in studies (Kaplan, 2000; Hiranandani, 2005; Siebers, 2005; Ploy, 2006; Sherry, 2006; Daniel et al., 2015; Clare, 2013; Nair, 2014; Russell, 2018; Nielsen, 2013; Penrose Jr, 2015; WHO, 2018). All of those studies discuss the social view of disabled people and some interventions put in place, they also describe disabled people's view of themselves. The theories discussed look at other norms in the society that affect disabled people not being able to access education.

In conclusion we need to point out that theories are very critical in determining the course of scientific studies, and so the discussion provided theoretical concept indicators for policy implementation and development of policy implementation pathways.

2.5 Review of Empirical Literature Related to Access to Education by Learners Living with Disabilities in Different Contexts

This section presents a discussion of the empirical literature related to access to education by learners living with disabilities in different contexts. The arrangement of the review is according to the study objectives; policy context in selected regions, factors influencing policy implementation of access to education by learners living with disability, and lastly strategies for improving access to education for learners living with disability. A critical review of the successes and gaps is carried out by comparing studies done in different geographical environments and countries.

2.5.1 Policies on Access to Education for Disabled Persons from Different Countries

The right to education is internationally acknowledged as a principal human right and essential for sustainable development irrespective of one's status, physically or emotionally. A number of international standard-setting instruments have come out strongly to protect the fundamental human right to education (UNESCO, 1990; UNESCO, 2010; UNESCO, 2017). A UNESCO (2015) report and studies by Mtuli (2015) and Muiti (2010) have confirmed access to education as a major concern for school age children with a disability. Somerset's (2011) and Crosby (2015) research

however revealed that disabled people undergo different problems while in the school system, resulting in massive dropout and forcing many countries globally to design relevant policies to curb the problem. Muthili's (2010) study and reports from UNESCO (1989), UNESCO (2003) and UNESCO (2015) noted the influence of the 1948 Universal Declaration of Human Rights, the world declaration on Education for All, (EFA) in 1990 and the adoption of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities CRPD (2006) as an ear opener for many countries to come up with necessary policies in favour of disabled children to acquire education.

In the United Kingdom, the government came up with a 2010-2015 policy called special educational needs and disability (SEND), where the purpose was to harmonise assessment process and determine children or young person's needs across education, health and care requirements; the policy replaced statement of special needs and learning difficulty assessments with an education, health and care (EHC) plan for children and young people with complex needs. Also, this policy introduced a selection of personal budgets for those with an EHC plan so that they can choose which services are best for them and their family, among others (Gov. UK, 2015; UNESCO, 2015; WHO, 2011; WHO and World Bank, 2011; UN, 2015; WB, 2015).

In the USA, education openings for people with disabilities were transformed in the 20th and 21st centuries largely because of federal legislation. In 1975, the education for all handicapped children Act ensured free public education for all students with disabilities, and the act assured all services related to disability needed to be provided. In 1990 Individual with Disability Act (IDEA) replaced PL 94-142, and this amendment to the IDEA continued to assist students with disabilities in a variety of ways. In 1997 another amendment to the IDEA articulated a new challenge to improve results for these children and their families (Osgood 2005). USA policy has been moving with time, and in 2017 the office of special education and rehabilitative services phased out a total of 72 policy documents because they were considered outdated, unnecessary or ineffective (Helena, 2015; Moriah Baringit, 2017). Canada's policy on disability was formulated and implemented at the provincial and territorial level; however, in all of the jurisdictions three policy themes are common: concern of parents and other family members for children with disabilities; Individual Education Plans,

funding allocation method; and transition planning (UNESCO, 2015; UN, 2015; WB, 2015).

In Australia the Disability Discrimination Act (DDA) was formulated in 1992, and the act made it unlawful to discriminate regarding the provision of goods, services or facilities against people on the basis that they have, have had, or may have a disability, and this affected learners with disabilities, and the rules and regulations in institutions in which they learn. In Ireland education for disable learners was introduced after a special education review committee (SERC) report, a report of a government commission on the status of people with disabilities, and a strategy for equality commission on the status of people with disabilities. All of these reports culminated in the National Council for Curriculum and Assessment (NCCA) discussion document (1999); Special Educational Needs; Curriculum Issues; the Education Act; the Equal Status Act; Education for Persons with Special Educational Needs Bill; and the Disability Bill (2004). In Sweden access to education by disabled learners is considered alongside the basis for health, medical care, and social service, together with education, and is regulated in several laws, such as the Social Services Act (SoL), the Health and Medical Services Act (HSL) and the Education Act (SkolL). The Swedish government believes that the measures of society should reinforce the opportunities of the individual to live an independent and self-governing life. In Greece there was a shift in the education of people with a disability, including behavioural problems and pervasive developmental disorders, after the institution of Law 2817/2000, which introduced the abolition of discriminating terminology and the promotion of respect for individual differences, and its purpose was the educational and social integration of people. Another law, 3699/2008, was introduced to expand on this and encouraged a policy of education and integration of those with special educational needs (Syriopoulou-Delli, 2010; Anna and Ruby, 2007; Meegan, 2006; Kerstin, 2011; Miller and Hayward, 2016).

Accession of Romania to the European Union, under the chapter regarding human rights and the protection of minorities, made it make a lot of changes in support of minorities. The government under the constitution and in the Law on Education (Nr. 84/7 Chapter IV/1995) gave opportunities to and recondition of the integration of children with SEN in mainstream schools to the services befitting them. Regulation 4653/8.10.2001 further stated the methodology of the organizing and functioning of

educational services for deficient children/students integrated in the public school. Russia also came up with a children with disability law, referred to as the Law of Russian Federation on education number 12.06.1992 N3266-1, whose content gave an opportunity to the 1st and 2nd groups of severity right to apply to a state or municipal educational institution of middle and higher professional education without competition (Alois , 2011; Irina, 2003).

In India a disability policy called the national education policy was introduced in 1986 with an aim of integrating the handicapped with the general public at all levels as equal partners, to prepare them for normal growth, and to enable them to face life with courage and confidence. However, after the initiation of education for all EFA in 1990, India again came up with two important policy measures; (1) the rehabilitation council of India Act 1992, and (2) a national policy for persons with disability in 2006. All of these were purposed to clarify the framework under which the state, civil society, and private sector must operate to ensure a dignified life for persons with disability and support for their caretakers. Interestingly, by 2009 India enacted another policy that ensured free and compulsory education to all children between the ages of six and fourteen. In Indonesia disabled children acquiring education is recognized under law number 20 year 2003; it stipulates that all citizens with all types of disabilities be compulsorily provided with education, and the law empowers all types of disability to be considered in the education system (Singh, 2016; Hadis, 2005; Antoni, 2012).

In Pakistan a national policy for persons with disabilities was introduced in 2002 with aim of inclusion and equalization of opportunities for these individuals. In 2008 a special Citizens Act (24 of 2008) was introduced to provide the accessibility of disabled citizens to every public place. In Thailand equal opportunity in education for disabled members of society is prioritized in the constitution of the Kingdom of Thailand (1997): Section 30 and 55, and the national education Act B.E. 2542 (1999): section 10. aims at protecting the rights of persons with disabilities to education in accordance with their rights under the Constitution (Ahmed et al., 2011; Sermsap, 2011).

In Iraq, the 2015 constitution article 32 empowers the right of all children to education, including disabled children, article 34 of the constitution notes education as a fundamental factor in the progress of society and it makes primary education mandatory and the state guarantees the combat of illiteracy. In Jordan disabled people

care law no.12 of 1993 was formulated and replaced with the law on the rights of persons with disabilities no. 31 of 2007. This law was in line with the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD), which called for non-discrimination against all disabled children both in school and outside. Saudi Arabia, under Royal Decree No. 1219, dated 9/7/1376H, gave the Ministry of Education power to offer free education to every student, including those with disabilities (Alison et al., 2012; IRCKHF, 2016; Abdalleh and Abdullah, 2018; Alnahdi, 2014).

The South Africa government since 2001 has had a policy to end the exclusion of children with disabilities from the country's schools and to provide education for all children in inclusive schools. Education policy set out in education white paper 6 gave directions on the provision of schooling for children with disabilities to occur in mainstream schools for moderately-disabled learners, full-service schools that are specially adapted mainstream schools, and special schools that are exclusively for learners with severe disabilities. In Ghana, disability policy on education was built upon sections in the 1992 Constitution, and they addressed creating an environment for dealing with the diverse education needs of disable learners to fit in the society. Nigeria created national policy on education in 1977 based on Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC) 1989; the Child's Rights Act, Laws of the Federation 2004; the Universal Basic Education (UBE) Act 2004. Free and compulsory education, and the parents' role in educating these learners was well documented in all those policy frameworks. In Tunisia Article 48 of the constitution, 2014 considers that the protection of the disabled is a national responsibility. The country promulgated the constitution and created a high council for the disabled to ensure access to medical and social services for people with disabilities; to ensure the basic training necessary for social integration; to ensure effective integration in employment, entertainment and sports; and to create an institute for the advancement of persons with disabilities. In Senegal the government established a law on the promotion and protection of the rights of persons with disabilities which provides children and adolescents with the right to a free education. This law guarantees equal opportunities for persons with disabilities and others, as well as the promotion and protection of their rights against all forms of discrimination (Hodgson, 2015; Republic of Ghana, 2013; Omede, 2016; Aminata and Korzekwa, 2014; Republic of Senegal, 2011).

In Zimbabwe the Disabled Person Act (1996) addresses the rights of people with disabilities in a number of circulars, Circular number P36 of 1990, provided guidelines for placement procedures for special classes, resource units and institutions; circular number 2 of 2000 directs inclusion of learners with albinism with reference to meaningful inclusion in schooling and co-curricular activities; and circular number 7 of 2005 offered guidelines for the inclusion of learners with disabilities in all school competitions. Interestingly, Zimbabwe only ratified the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities in 2013. In the Ethiopian constitution disabled people, children included are empowered under article 36 (2) to access any government facilities without restriction. It explains their right and stresses non-discrimination in all public and private welfare institutions. The Tanzania National Policy on Disability (NPD) was adopted in line with the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities. The policy expect support from the Tanzanian minister for labour, youth development, and sports, local and international communities to help disabled people more so learners to realise their goal of access education and participating in nation building. The Uganda law on disability is in article 34, and 35 of the 1995 constitution. The stress is on the right to education for persons with disability, and makes the government responsible for all their needs (Marcella and Carlo, 2014; Shimelis, 2011; Rutherford, 2011; Brian, 2015).

2.5.2 Factors Influencing Disability Policy Implementation for Access to Education

The strength of any policy is the degree to which it is implemented for the intended goal. The factors influencing implementation of policies are numerous depending on goals, supporting theory, law enforcement authority, and empirical evidence. Other factors influencing the failure or success of implementation have been identified as the dilemmas of administration, the dissipation of energy, the diversion of resources, and the deflection of goals Anton, 1978; Pressman and Wildavsky, 1973; Bardach, 1977; Brinkerhoff, 1998; Bouckaert and Peter, 2010; Copeland and Wexler, 2015; DeGroff, 2009).

In developed world, countries such as United Kingdom, USA, and Canada, UNESCO (2015), WB (2015) and UKaid (2015) reports revealed disabled learner were well catered for in schools as per their policies required, the schools had well trained

teachers, learners and their care givers had a proper medical scheme, and school environmental infrastructural facilities was accommodative to types of disabled learners to access education. The report however disclosed a lack of professional recognition of educational, psychological, social, and cultural contexts of a child with additional support requirements as a serious factor hindering the implementation of policies in place. Reports from ELSSEN (2001) and Economist Intelligence Unit (2010) together studies by Louise (2013), Salter et al. (2015), Bryson et al. (2009), Elward (2011), Edward et al. (1998).and Kerstin (2011) observed proper implementation of policies in other developed countries including Australia, Sweden, and Ireland. These countries have proper educational and medical schemes for their disabled learners, teachers were well trained and adequate, as environmental infrastructural facilities were satisfying. The studies attributed increase in disabled learners access education in those countries to such development. However, the same studies find poor coordination of school leaders and policymakers in creating a flexible transitional framework, also the reports noted lack of up-to-date and timely information to support children with additional problems are among the factors influencing the implementation of policies.

In Russia, Greece, and Romania the implementation of disability policy is equally successful but not as much compared to other European countries; they still experience problems of resistance in change among the citizens, lack of collaboration, resourcing, and at times tension among authority figures. The counties have nevertheless tried to fulfil EFA and CRPD requirements by providing facilities, training teachers, increasing awareness campaigns, and research on new technology to ensure that disabled children are in schools and cared for Kavouni, 2016; Clerke, 2015; Beamish et al., 2010; Watson, 2009; Foloștină et al., 2014; Zvoleyko and Klimenko, 2016; Louise, 2013; Karr et al., 2017; Callan, 2018; UNESCO, 2015; WHO, 2011; WB, 2015).

India, Indonesia, and Pakistan have formulated very successful policies and made quite a lot of steps to achieve them, but the successes have not been so glaring because of a lack of awareness about facilities, the perception of parents towards the education of disabled children, the unnoticeable characteristics of disabilities in the community, negative attitude towards disability and education for children with a disability, and a lack of training and interest. Despite all of these factors, there has been

a lot of improvement in terms of access for disabled learners due to government provisions (UNESCO, 2015; WHO, 2011; WHO and World Bank, 2011; UN, 2015; WB, 2015; Limaye, 2016; Hadis, 2005; Antoni, 2012).

In Iraq, Saudi Arabia, Jordan, and Tunisia policies in place have found some hiccups in making implementation more successful. The governments of these countries have come across other unanticipated issues including new causes of disabilities such as; chronic diseases, work injuries, and infectious diseases. Other factors these countries encountered to make policy implementation not so successful are; lack of resources, poor infrastructural facilities, discriminations, lack of awareness, cultural and faith related problem (Polat, 2011; Jeanine and Carroll, 2008; WB, 2015; UNESCO, 2015). Other studies (Giacchino and Kakabadse, 2003, Groce, 2004; Anthony, 2009; Polat, 2011; Ibrahim, 2013; Donohue and Bornman, 2014; Alothman, 2014) on Iraq, Saudi Arabia, Jordan, and Tunisia identified cultural discrimination, traditional values, a deep sense of spirituality and prejudice as very obstructing factor for disabled people to access education in these region as such bar policy implementers from achieving their goal.

Policy implementation in South Africa, Nigeria, Tunisia, Senegal, and Ghana has achieved a lot in placing the majority of disabled children in the school program; however, there have been some challenges particularly with built environment which is not well accommodative for most types of PWDs, equally these countries are faced with a problem of lack enforcement Act, they have weakness in the provisions of the Act, and also lack public awareness within their policy framework. Other issues affecting policy implementation in these countries include; (1) the complexity and high cost of designs which incorporate the needs of the disabled, (2) inadequate policies and standards, (3) lack of consultation and involvement of PWDs in decision-making and (4) ineffectiveness of disability groups (Maher, 2009; Glaser and Pletzen, 2012; Franke and Guidero, 2012; Jones, 2015; Kholeka, 2014; South Africa Ministry of Education, 2001). A study by Olanrewaju and Rasaki (2014) and a report by UNESCO (2015) add negative attitudes and cultural beliefs, the unavailability of facilities, poverty, low parental involvement, lack of supporting legislation, and administrative barriers and inadequate employment of professionals.

Studies (Pang and Richey, 2005; Horn and Thiel, 2002; Najjingo, 2009; Moyi, 2012) and reports from the government of Zimbabwe (1996) and UNESCO (2010) in Zimbabwe, Tanzania, and Uganda indicate that the policy implementation in those countries have experienced some challenges despite the good policies they formulated. Lack of public awareness, cultural roadblocks, government failure to institute policy by non-collection of donations from organizations and private donors, social cultural factors, big class sizes, lack of supportive infrastructural facilities, low teacher student ratio, poor resources in special and regular schools, and parents and caregivers feigning ignorance about awareness of the existence policies were mentioned as challenges.

In Kenya policy implementation for disabled children accessing education has experienced mixed challenges Grut (2007), Muthili (2010), Kett (2012) and Rein (1983) observed poor attendance by disabled students due to a lack of proper facilities, insufficient resources, poverty, stigmatization, and sexual abuse among learners with disabilities. However, a report from KNHRC (2014) and UNESCO (2015) revealed that learners with disabilities are at higher risk of dropping out of school compared to able-bodied students due constant absenteeism, noncompliance with school regulations, and poor attention by teachers due to a lack of training on how to handle disabled children. Cultural beliefs and stigmatization were also identified in the same report. More studies (Muchiri and Roberson, 2000; Muiti, 2010; Chomba et al., 2014; Mutua and Dimitrov, 2001; Oriendo, 2003; Njiru, 2012; Njeri, 2011; Njagi, 2015; Michael, 2016) noted perception, few trained personnel, class design, scarce resources, curriculum design, and societal view of individuals with disabilities as punishment and a curse from God . As such, those factors stand as impediments to policy implementation in Kenya.

2.5.3 Strategies for Improving Disabled Learners Access to Education

Policy provision for access to education by learners living with a disability in most countries recognizes their right to access education without any form of discrimination, and believes in shared ideas to shelter all disabled children by making schools meet the needs of all children irrespective of their disability, and as such most policies accept the ability of any children to learn as a way of accommodating the less fortunate ones (UNESCO, 2009; UNESCO, 2010; UNESCO, 2015; UKaid, 2015). The

DFID (2012) report reveal the use of existing laws, the collection of adequate data, and the improvisation of environmental infrastructure as the best strategy to enable disabled learners to access education.

The majority of developed countries, including the United States, the UK, France, and Australia, have reported measures including developing facilities, supportive environmental design, sufficient financial support, and research as the best strategies to have all disabled children in school (Frankel et al., 2010; Franke and Guidero, 2012; Halfon and Friendly, 2013; Fritton, 2009; Geyer et al., 2017). Equally in Iraq, Latvia, Mauritius, Morocco, and Indonesia issues of discriminations, lack of awareness, and environmental infrastructural facilities and designs have been considered as a serious hindrance for disabled children to access schooling. These countries are developing new laws, adding more resources, creating awareness campaigns on both cultural/religious-inclined discrimination, and also building up the environment with such facilities as ramps, lifts and other suitable public facilities, inclusive of sanitation, all of which have been considered as options (UNESCO, 2009; UNESCO, 2010; UNESCO, 2015; Brooke et al., 2011; Dillenburger, 2012; UNESCO-Indonesia, 2012). In Barbados, a programme called Edutech has been used to provide facilities for deaf and blind children in school in anticipation to solve some their problems as policy requires (UNESCO, 2015).

Strategies in the MENA regions for promoting access to education for disabled learners was identified by UNESCO (2015) and the World Bank (2011) as developing a non-discrimination policy and the removal of social stigma through awareness campaigns, developing environmental infrastructure-friendly facilities, involving disabled people in the decision-making process and availing required health services and employment opportunities for disabled citizens. Studies in South Africa, Nigeria, Ghana, Uganda, and Zimbabwe have since settled on strategies for preparing teachers in the skills required to tackle various types of disability needs, and the provision of adequate funds to cater to their needs. Other studies (Donohue and Bornman, 2014; Olanrewaju Adebisi et al., 2014; Najjingo, 2009; Moyi, 2012) Ananga, 2008; USAID, 2009) report discuss training of education offices on policy, and involving stakeholders in policy implementation as the best strategies for reducing stigmatization.

In Kenya Muthili (2010) and Mwangi et al. (2014) studies observed a number of strategies to improve access to education for disabled children such as the following: providing more financial support directed to the agencies responsible for promoting learning for the disabled-the study found that the MoE needs to upscale its implementation framework by disseminating information to local education offices; emphasise mass sensitization; train human resources; and advance a supportive curricula. Equally studies by Njiru (2012), Adoyo (2007), Kett (2012) and Kipkosgei (2013) observed timely remittance of adequate funds; building staff capacity to modernise their skill in education for the disabled, sensitizing the community on inclusive education and adequately staffing public schools to cater to increased enrolment and diverse forms of disabilities as important elements for the promulgation of education for the disabled. Other strategies that the government in Kenya has put through against dehumanizing children are ensuring that all children are treated with respect irrespective of their physical appearance, and medical facilities, including counselling and constant examination have been some options that the government has enacted (Muiti, 2010; Wachianga et al., 2015; Wangari, 2012; Muhombe et al., 2015; Namukoa, 2012).

2.6 Conclusion

The discussion above confirms that access to education by the disabled is a serious problem around the world, and more so in Kenya. Enabling policies are in place, however implementation and proper strategies to enhance successful access remain an issue. In many contexts, including Kenya, various issues associated with access to education by the disabled are unexamined or under-studied, and those that by chance have been carried out using a different analytic methodology are far from policy implementation theories.

Focusing on the context of Kenya and in particular Kisumu and Siaya counties, the literature was very specific in relation to concepts, prevalence, theories and chronological features. One of the fundamental features of this review was that it categorically argued why research was needed in the context of the two counties in Kenya. In fact, there is evidence of the dearth of lived experienced knowledge about

the various forms, causes, consequences, coping-strategies and help-seeking practices, and community perceptions and activities about access to education by the disabled. Broadly, the information and arguments provided in the review inextricably fit the purpose of the study, and the ways in which the present research objectives and questions were designed.



CHAPTER 3

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1 Introduction

This section provides an explanation of the research approach adopted by the study to ensure that a satisfactory conclusion is reached according to the research design. Corinne (2015) and Commons and Commons (2012) cite four dimensions that are mostly adhered to in a research design, including purpose, theoretical paradigm, and context and techniques. Garner (2009), Durrheim (2006), Terre Blanche and Kelly (1999) and Rademaker (2011) claim that the qualitative research paradigm is applied in studies where an interpretive approach is vital for the data analysis and discussion.

3.2 Research Paradigm

Egon (1990) and Terre Blanche and Durrheim (2006) identified three categories of paradigms of research: ontology, epistemology, and methodology. They observed that understanding ontology makes one have an idea of the nature of truth and reality, while epistemology is the nature of acquiring knowledge. Snape and Spencer (2003) and Durrheim (2006) discussed methodology as a technique that researchers adopt to guide the study, and as such, this research was guided by a qualitative research design approach. Nolan and Behi (1995) and Creswell (2007) argued that qualitative research approach has attendance of detailing a realistic report from the respondent worldview. On their part Young and Hren (2012) and Holloway (2009) observed that qualitative research, more so the phenomenology aspect of it, is very important and stands on that rare premise hinged on the participants' own experience and feeling.

According to Creswell (2013) and Fu (2011), qualitative inquiry is keen on knowing and understanding one's perception, attitude, and interest regarding issues. The method provides insight into the research topic and its objectives following the methodological process befitting the study. Yin (2011) and Patton and Cochran (2010)

opined that the qualitative paradigm is concerned with listening, observing, describing, and learning experience, and also noted that the data collected should be well examined following evidence in identified themes. Equally the studies (Patton, 2002; Catherine and Rossman, 2011; Rossman and Rallis, 2012) described qualitative research as respondent centred, humanistic, with a focus on context rather than interpretation as being more emergent and evolving, making it flexible and non-sequential in nature. Researchers embracing this approach according to Arksey (1996), Jennifer (2001) and Heindel (2014) have to observe flexibility, and use both exploratory and inductive methods.

This study used the qualitative research approach since the topic required the exploration of feelings, behaviours, experiences, and perceptions of the respondent in relation to policy implementation and strategies, as supported by Yin (2011), Rossman and Rallis (2012) and Creswell (2013), who further argued that the qualitative paradigm tends to respond to questions of “how” or “what,” not “Why”. This paradigm is therefore capable of supporting and helping to study and answer the research questions, namely; what is the policy context of students living with disability in Kenya? What are the factors that influence policy implementation for access to education among the students living with disability in Kenya? To recommend for access to education improvement.

3.3 Interpretive Research Paradigm

This study followed the interpretive approach theoretical paradigm. According to Kelly (2006), Terre and Kelly (1999) and Egon (1990) this approach is founded on the basis that people can understand others’ experiences through interaction and listening to what they say. Patton (2002) and Andrews and Tamboukou (2015) add that the interpretive paradigm is a more flexible research method, is sensitive, and suits complex issues. In their contribution, Lucianna (2015), Nathan (2011) and Fritton (2009) claimed that the interpretative paradigm attaches meaning to what people experience in the context in which they find themselves, i.e. the values of a phenomenon change from one individual to another, from time to time, and situation to situation. Creswell (2013) and Yin (2011) noted that with the interpretative paradigm both

participants and researchers have personal effects on the study, and their own values and experiences, including bias that has some impact on the research. Wendy (2002) advised that studies adopting the qualitative approach require proper understanding of a phenomenon since a thick description is crucial, unlike the cause and effect relationships in the quantitative approach.

Access to education by disabled students is a subjective phenomenon; thus, multiple realities of disabled students, their parents, teachers, principals, and education officers in their set up can assist bring real meaning of what prevails. For a proper review of respondents' experiences, the present study uncovered the respondents' perceptions, attitudes, and values concerning their personal reality. An interpretative approach was key in doing this since it allowed direct interaction with the respondents and acquisition of first-hand ideas of the situation.

Policy implementation theory according to Mazmanian and Sabatier (1983) and Meier (2003), seeks to explain ways of carrying out elementary policy decisions, what comes out of the government's intention, and the impact it causes. Therefore, the interpretive paradigm in this study sought to focus on bringing to light not only the challenges that students living with a disability face, but also to discover the special things that policy implementers can do to help these learners access education that has often been taken for granted, yet this can be utilized as social capital to maximize their resources for the betterment of their education. The interpretation in this case presented four contrasting layers of analysis: (1) the layer that brings to light oppression, neglect, and force in policy decision-making, structure, processes, authority, and even outcomes; (2) the layer that brings out what is special in disability teachers, principals, parents, and education officers at the grass roots level that the government or ministry of education can gain from; (3) the layer that shows how the curriculum and infrastructural facilities suit the needs of both learners and their learning compared to (4) the layer that shows government expectations in relation to available disability access to education policies.

3.4 Unit of Analysis

The individual was used as the unit of analysis in order to obtain views from the lived experiences of the respondents. This is in line with Rubin and Babbie (2015), Patton and Cochran (2010) and Catherine and Rossman (2011) who suggested that qualitative approaches focus on individuals, but can also centre on groups, organizations or processes. In this study, learners living with disability, their parents, teachers, principals and education officers served as the focus of inquiry.

3.4.1 Population of the Study

Qualitative researchers such as Creswell (2007), Arksey (1996) and Jennifer (2001) support the fact that the respondents chosen under interpretative paradigm need to be able to provide a considerable contribution on to experiences being investigated rather than fulfil the representative requirements of statistical inferences. This study drew its population from policy implementors, direct and indirect beneficiaries with view of investigating their views on the experiences they encounter with existing policies.

3.4.2 Target Sample

The study targeted three special schools in two counties in Kenya: Kisumu and Siaya. These counties were chosen because of their easy access by the researcher. The schools selected were St. George Special Secondary School, the Nico Ausa Special School for the Blind, and Fr. Ouderaa Special Secondary for the Hearing. Eighteen teachers were selected from 3 schools for the focus group discussion, and 3 parents were selected from each school. Other targeted samples included three principals at the selected schools, two education officers, and nine learners living with disabilities.

Table 3.1 showing the Study Respondents

Respondent type	Number
Education	2
Principal	3
Teachers (FGD)	18 (3*6)
Parent	3
learners LWD	9
Total	35

3.4.3 Research Settings and Research Participants

The beginning of a research is deciding on the topic which is meant for investigation, and this wholly depends on the researcher's interest, which is then followed by where the research ought to be done; that is, the site. Geographical placements play a major role in settings and researchers are always very particular about straightforward access to the study area. The site which makes entry possible is preferred since it supports well-built contact with the participants (Tashakkori and Teddlie, 2003; Kirshnarai, 2005; Ellsberg and Heise, 2013; Nachmias and Nachmias, 1992; Rossman and Rallis, 2012; Catherine and Rossman, 2011). In this research, I borrowed heavily from those studies given that I considered a topic of personal interest; illiteracy among disabled people was real in my mind; considered Kenya because is my mother country; chose Siaya and Kisumu counties due to proximity hence time and financial consideration; also, I picked on Catholic sponsored special schools because am a dedicated member of the Catholic Church as such getting inside those school was easier. In essence, the use of one's own country, county, and religion for conducting research is a type of insider researcher (Kanuha, 2000; Pugh et al., 2000 Bailey, 2007) explained that insider research creates a thorough understanding of the phenomenon, helps situate the researcher in the research experience, and it supports greater understanding of the culture and society and even the political underpinnings.

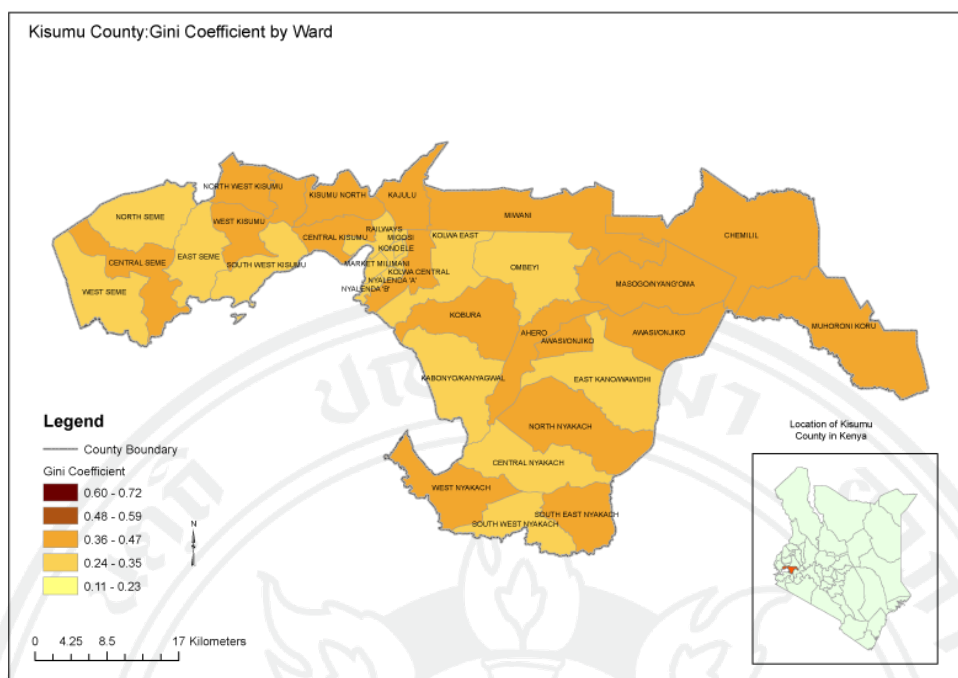


Figure 3.1 Map of Kenya showing Kisumu County
Source: Study of Kenya Gini Coefficient

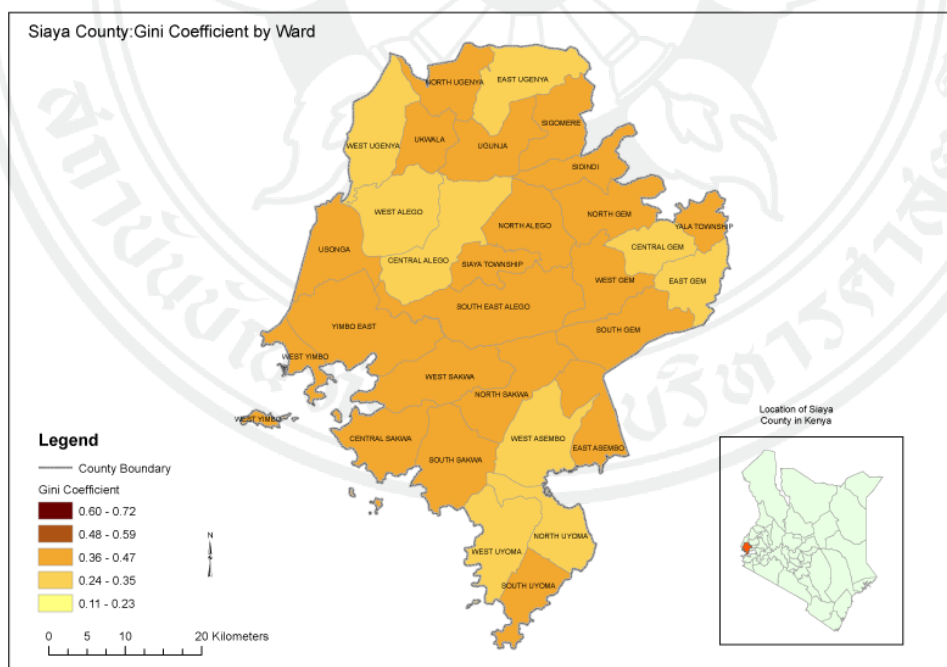


Figure 3.2 Map Showing Siaya County
Source: Study of Kenya Gini Coefficient

Coming up with a setting assists the researcher in accessing the participants easily, reducing data collection time, and more importantly it helps build trust and rapport with the participants. My decision regarding a favourable site assisted me in getting all of the participants at the appropriate time. Marshall and Rossman (2011) and Silverman (2000) opined that researchers can make use of existing relationships and contacts for their research, and argue against entry to new sites as time consuming, and this might be more true if the research is sensitive like the present one. Disability studies are very sensitive as my concern was how easily I could gain access to reliable participants, given that the tradition of my research required thorough understanding and trust among and between the participants and the researcher. It also appeared from the literature search that no one had ever done qualitative research on those areas in such schools among such learners, their parents, teachers, principals and education officers in charge. Table 3 shows the location of the study.

Table 3.2 Research Setting

County	School/Ed office	Participant	Purpose
Siaya	Father Audraa Special School for the Deaf	Learners	Learners
		1. Anita	Personal experience/education access
		2. Edward	
		3. Norbert	Parents
		Parents	Experiences with the child/school/ other stakeholders
		1. Lidbro	Principal
		Principal	Experiences with child/ parents/ education/ other stakeholders
		1. Horriner	Focus Group discussion
		Focus discussion	Experiences with the child/ school environment/parents/other stakeholders
		Six teachers	

County	School/Ed office	Participant	Purpose
Kisumu	Nico Hauser	Learners	Learners
	Special School for the Blind	1. Jacky 2. John 3. Moss	Person experience/ education access.
		Parents	Parents
		1. Selly	Experiences with the child/school/ other stakeholders
		Principal	Principal
		1. Jacinta	Experiences with child/parents/ education/other stakeholders
		Focus Group discussion	Focus Group discussion
		Six teachers	Experiences with the child/ school environment/parents/other stakeholders
	County Education Office	Education Officer	Experience with schools and stakeholders
		1. Otunga	
Kisumu		Learners	Learners
	St. George Special School for the Handicap	1. Mercy 2. Stanley 3. David	Person experience/education access
		Parents	Parents
		1. Roko	Experiences with the child/school/ other stakeholders
		Principal	Principal
		1. Richard	Experiences with child/parents/ education/other stakeholders
		Focus Group Discussion	Focus Group discussion

County	School/Ed office	Participant	Purpose
		six teachers	Experiences with the child/school environment/parents/other stakeholders
County Education Office		Education Officer Mr. Oduor	Experience with schools environment/parents and stake holders

Planning research requires proper participant selection with the intention of getting the right sample for the study. Therefore, qualitative research is more of a flexible process with no rules regarding sample size. Generally the research purpose for this tradition is not clearly deterministic (Gravetter, 2011; Rubin and Babbie, 2015; Rubin, 1995).

3.4.4 Reasons for Picking the Sample

I identified participants with the required information to help me get what my study needed. However to achieve this I exploited both formal and informal networks as advised by scholars (Hennink and Bailey, 2011); Rossman and Rallis, 2012; Creswell, 2013). Relatives, church leaders, government officials, and friends were purposively sampled. Purposive sampling was the best method for the study. Through such interactions five different respondents were identified to make the study a success: learners, teachers, principals, parents, and education officers. The study adopted a phenomenological approach where the experiences of real persons affected are very critical, and as such getting direct information from disabled learners served to provide a true and exact picture of what happens.

The parents of the learners were selected because they were the ones that interacted with learners from birth, had experience with the child's needs, their sadness, joy, treatment, provision, scorn and any intervention and support. Teachers on the other hand were identified because of their everyday encounter with disabled learners in school, and they see various changes in the child, understand why others dropout, work with education officers to institute policies, hear and adjudicate learners' challenges in

daily life as they interact with curriculum and environmental infrastructures. Education officers were the bridge between schools where the disabled learners are housed and the government, as such policy implementation in schools was done through them since they inspected and gave directions on areas they deemed fit to support the learners' access to education.

3.4.5 Rationale of the Sample and Targeted Population

A sample size of 17 participants and 3 focus group discussion was accepted as per the general phenomenological trails according to Creswell (2007) and Moustakas (1994) and as per few studies identified (Ref Table 3.3). However, the following order was used to select the participants: 1. The learner participants were picked among those that had been in school for at least 8 months year, had at least any of the following form of impairments: visual/albino, hearing, deaf/mute, physical, etc, and had experience with a disability for at least 6 months; 2. the parent participants were selected among adults that had lived with the disabled learners for before joining this school or otherwise as guardians, surrogates or real parents in any of the three schools at least sometimes; 3. principals and education officers were chosen among those currently serving in those positions; and finally 4. the teachers for the focus group discussion were selected among the teachers teaching in specific school.

Though the qualitative research approach embraces small sample sizes, the manner in which the sizes are selected is very important to achieve intended objectives. Onwuegbuzie and Leech (2007) and Patton (2002) warn that sample size should not be too small but reasonable as per the research requirements, and also argued that a large number or poor investigation can lead a researcher into information redundancy. Terre Blanche and Durrheim (2006) stated that sample size is important in reducing information redundancy as it rests on the amount of details used in a study. Rallis and Rossman (2003) and Yin (2011) on their part claim that interpretive research has no rules for the sampling size but it simply depends on the degree of commitment to the case study, and the level of analysis and reporting. Still on sample size (Smith and Osborn, 2003; Ryan et al., 2014; Bernard and Ryan, 2012; supported a more realistic sample size ranging between 20 and 60 respondents. Creswell (2013) however opined that a sample size of between 3 and 15 participants is adequate for a phenomenological study.

Table 3.3 Sample Sizes in Phenomenological Ph.D. Dissertations Recently Published in Selected Universities

	Writer, Year, University	Title of the Ph.D. Dissertation	Sample size
1	Madeline Lorraine Peters (2010) University of Massachusetts	A Phenomenological Study of the Experiences of Helping Professionals with Learning Disabilities	10 Helping professionals with learning disabilities
2	Kirk A. Zeeck (2012), University of St. Thomas, Minnesota	A Phenomenological Study of the Lived Experiences of Elementary Principals Involved in Dual-Career Relationships with Children	8 Elementary principals
3	Heath V. Tuttle (2012) University of Nebraska – Lincoln	The Lived Experiences of Faculty who use Instructional Technology: A phenomenological Study	20 Faculty members
4	Michael D. Smith (2009) University of South Florida	Striving and Surviving: The Phenomenology of the first-year Teaching Experience	4 Participants
5	Mark Daniel Mason (2012) Utah State University.	A Phenomenological Study of Professional Identity Change in Released-time Seminary Teachers	6 Study Participants
6	John Anthony Breckner (2012) University of Tennessee	A phenomenological Study of Doctoral Students Attrition in Counsellor Education	9 Participants

3.5 Data Collection Approach and Method

3.5.1 Phenomenological In-depth Interviews and Lived Experiences

Phenomenological in-depth interviews are a procedure using the constructivist or interpretive paradigm, and it commonly seeks to comprehend the deep meaning of people's experiences and to interpret them to come up with the possible meaning of the life to that person by investigating meaning, view, attitude, perception and understanding exactly what the respondent feels of the situation (Moustakas, 1994; Creswell, 2013; Rossman and Rallis, 2012). The concern of the founder of the phenomenological approach Edmund Husserl was to understand lived experiences and how they are internalised (Polkinghorne, 1989; Bernard and Ryan, 2012; Elif, 2003; Creswell, 2013). Catherine and Rossman (2011) and Becker (1992) explained that phenomenology studies require deep understanding of the participants' morals, opinions, viewpoints, and assumptions, which is mostly done through serious reflection, as such the phenomenologist hold that one's experience is the base of knowledge, and it is not easy to have human globe devoid of experiences. In order to fulfil the premise of this study, this approach was used to acquire knowledge about the participants' experiences. The method allowed me to ask the participants questions, and to respond to their replies so as to obtain ample facts from their stories and perspectives noted. This was in line with the study of Morrow and Smith (2000), DiCicco-Bloom and Crabtree (2006) and Morrow (2005).

3.6 Sampling Technique

Two sampling techniques were used in this study: a purposive sampling and convenience sampling. Convenience sampling was used to select the parents and teachers, and this was done following the principles' advice. Newton (2010), Sköldbberg (2009) Onwuegbuzie and Leech (2007) clarified that convenience sampling is a technique used by a researcher to sample participants capable of fulfilling the study expectations, and the researcher takes what he can get since the method is more like accidental sampling, and the selection is usually very deterministic. Additionally, the study used purposive sampling in order to select 3 principals, 2 education officers, and

9 learners, and this was considered following the studies of Smith and Osborn (2003), Janet (2016) and John Adams et al. (2007), who observed that purposive sampling helps to serve special needs but non-representative subsets of a larger population.

Table 3.4 Sampling Types for Specific Respondents

Sampling Technique			
Convenience	Parents	Teachers	
Purposive	Principal	Education officer	Learners

3.7 Data Collection Methods

This study employed three techniques to collect the data: (1) documentary research; review of relevant literature, for instance journals, research reports, news, books, oral texts, and diaries; (2) interviews; and (3) focus group discussion. These were considered since the objective of a phenomenological study is to make clear people's perceptions of the phenomenon (Creswell, 2013; Young and Hren, 2012; Yin, 2011; Lena and Colin, 2010).

Table 3.5 Numbers of Respondents and Type of Data Collection Site

Respondent type	Number	Data collection type	Site for data collection
Education	2	In-depth interview	In his office
Principal	3	In-depth interview	In his office
Teachers	18 (3*6)	Focus group interview	Within the school
Parent	3	In-depth interview	Within the school
Learners LWD	9	In-depth interview Dairy report writing	Within the school

3.7.1 Documentary Research

Apart from published records and other archival documents, both oral and written, the researcher purchased special diaries and gave them to the learners participating in the study. The learners were requested to keep the special daily record and write everything they would like to tell someone else, for example: stories about their future dreams; plans in life; their daily experiences, for instance things that make them happy; things that make them sad; special memories; stories that they were told by their parents, or relatives or friends which they never wanted to forget; events or occasions that made them feel great, etc. The learners were encouraged to write at any time and whatever they liked. After two months the diaries were collected, transcribed, and analysed to bring to light the learners' perspectives regarding how they viewed themselves, the challenges they experienced, their hopes and dreams, their strengths and weaknesses, and the things that mattered to them. Utilization of a daily records according to John Adams et al. (2007) and Lena and Colin (2010) serves as a convenient way of getting information from sensitive populations that require a special environment to participate effectively and express themselves freely in a study

3.7.2 Interviews

Apart from the data collection through documentations the study used the interview research technique to collect information from the respondents. Terre Blanche and Durrheim (2006), Ploy (2006), Patton and Cochran (2010) and Creswell (2007) established that the interpretative research approach makes the interview method of the data collection the best in gaining entry into the individual's experiences for a particular issue. They claimed that the different interview methods that can be used are structured, semi-structured, and unstructured. Yin (2011) and Zeeck (2013) claimed that a structured form of interview permits the researcher to predict how the answers will look and provides a clue to the respondents' answers as flexibility is minimum, and the semi-structured interview schedule only offers a guide for the investigation of a phenomenon.

The use of semi-structured interviews in this study assisted in obtaining appropriate information from the principals, learners, education officers and parents since the data collection instrument chosen according to Newton (2010), Smith Jonathan and Osborn (2003) and Piergiorgio (2003) assist the researcher in building

rapport as they conversed and “dug into” the required information from the respondent. John Adams et al. (2007), Campbell and Baikie (2012) and Chaffin (1999) however stated that the semi interview method was flexible and provided sufficient time to allow the researcher get the exact information required, allows for probing and feedback seeking on unclear information, as such they found the semi-structured interview method consistent with the epistemology and methodology of the interpretive approach. Gary (2011) and Rosaline (2007) also supported semi the use of structured interviews in a qualitative study since it offers face-to-face interaction, and emerging issues can be noted and dealt with immediately; and respondents’ feedback and response can be explained in any manner.

Smith and Osborn (2003) and Newton (2010) however claimed that using semi-structured interviews has some limitations since they are time consuming, sometimes do not suit the respondent, and examining the information given is difficult. Denzin and Lincoln (2011) and Halperin and Heath (2012) observed semi structured interviews to be much concerned on personal experience of the researcher and the believe that no answer is wrong or right provided it represent the idea in question.

3.7.2.1 Conducting Interviews

The researcher conducted interviews with only 17 participants and 3 focus groups, and this was after receiving permission from various quarters and venues for the interview offered. During the interview each respondent was given his/her own time to emotionally prepare, and it was difficult to fix a time when all could be ready. Studies by Madeline (2010) and Baker et al. (2012) opined that unpreparedness or feeling uncomfortable can affect participation in the interview, and as such I could not have all respondents together in an interview as that would affect them negatively. For example, if one person says something that makes others feel intimidated it can result in making the others decide to keep quiet, feel ashamed, avoid saying what they would have said, or decide to exaggerate their experiences in order to fit in.

3.7.2.2 Developing the Interview Guide

The interview guide was developed with open-ended questions regarding what disability, access to education, support, and general curriculum implementation meant to the learners, principals, parents and education officers. An example of a question was to try to probe the respondents to know influence of policy on various aspect affecting

disable learner accessing education. Generally, the questions included were developed by reviewing the literature, assessing existing policy, models, and theories but with respect to the research questions; however, other questions emerged following the interview questions administered to the respondents during the description of issues. The interview schedule served to direct the respondents' (interviewees') response as the driver for the next possible question. Arkse (1996), Jennifer (2001) and Creswell (2007) stated that the interview schedule should be clear, simple, and easy to conceptualize in terms of meaning.

3.7.2.3 Audio-Recording of Interviews

The interviews were recorded after getting permission from the respondents. Snape (2003) and Janet (2016) claim the importance of audio recording to include free interaction in conversations, true records of interviews, true records are obtained, recording supports back checking and establish the right meaning of the verbatim quotations used. Terre Blanche and Durrheim (2006), Arksey (1996), Abraham (2017) and Walsham (2006) note some weaknesses of audio recordings to be the fact that they are time consuming, very expensive as transcribing by a hired person can be costly, and lack openness.

Piloting Interviews

Two learners, a parent, a principal, and one education officer formed part of the pilot. The purpose of pilot interview was to check point areas that required revision in terms of framing. Muthili (2010), Terre Blanche and Durrheim (2006), Charles (2008), Babbie (2015) and Sköldbberg (2009) stated that piloting allows the researcher to come up with a new way of posing amended questions to the actual respondents during the field work.

3.7.2.4 Interview Preparation

Prior to the interviews, the researcher familiarized himself with the details of each respondent, including what the learners wrote in their dairy. Secondly, the researcher ensured that sufficient time was set aside for logistics. Thirdly, the researcher made sure that all supporting documents and equipment were ready. The study took place at the venue provided by the school administration and the time for the interview was less than 90 minutes. The researcher however conducted the interviews both at the venue provided and sometimes outside in the playground where each participant felt

more relaxed. However, the researcher adjusted the setting of the interview based on respondents' choice. Upon arrival, the researcher introduced himself to the respondents, made all equipment and documents needed for the study ready, asked for permission to use the audio equipment, made sure that the interview place was private, and then asked for a signed consent form (Andrews et al., 2015; Israel and Hay, 2006; Arksey, 1996).

3.7.2.5 During the Interviews

At the start of the interview, the researcher began with a light conversation to familiarise himself with the respondent and to create rapport. Open-ended questions served as a guide for the study, and the researcher and his team did a lot of probing as the respondents told their side of the story, and during this time the researcher's opinions, leading questions, and closed-ended questions were avoided. This paved the way for getting at the respondents' personal experiences, attitudes, and perceptions as suggested by scholars (Smith, 2014; Bryson et al., 2009; Taylor and Vocht, 2011; Israel and Hay, 2006).

3.7.2.6 Ending the Interviews

The researcher concluded within the allocated time after getting the required information from the respondents. However, before the closure of the meeting the respondents' views of what to add were considered. The respondents were assured of the non-disclosure of whatever information they gave. This followed the qualitative requirements as stated by Walsham (2006), Terre and Durrheim (2006) and Corinne (2015) and the added qualitative respondent information relayed was stored in a locked cabinet where the researcher would be the only individual in possession of a key.

3.7.3 Focus Group Discussion

Focus group discussion (FGD) is a method commonly used in qualitative research where a researcher questions numerous participants gradually according to the research plan (Babbie 2015, Millward, 2012; Young and Hren, 2012). The purpose of FGD is to quickly gather a substantial amount of information. Lena and Colin (2010) and Edmunds (1999) observed that the FGD is a small group of people of 6 to 12 whose reactions are studied in a guided or open discussion. FGDs serve as semi-structured group discussions which yield qualitative data on the given issue at a given level by facilitating interaction between participants. In this study, a focus group discussion was administered with 6 teachers in all 3 selected special schools, and the researcher

assumed that the teachers in these schools shared common experiences and understood their admission, their role, curriculum, school management structures, the requirements for the learners and the general challenges affecting disability in the light of existing policies. Dimitriadis (2013), Edmunds (1999), Hafiz et al. (2007) and Corinne (2015) observed group discussions to be idea rich compared with group interview since they bring out common issues, areas of consensus, as well as different perspectives based on the individual experiences of the participants.

3.8 Data Analysis

Data analysis refers to a process of examining already-collected information for the purpose of achieving the study objective results. Creswell (2009), Bradley et al. (2007) and Chenail (2012)) posited that data analysis is an intelligent way of telling a story of what has been gathered from others. However, Braun and Clarke (2006); Yin (2011), Tashakkori and Teddlie (2003) isolated various stages in the data analysis to include getting used to data from the field, coming up with codes, providing themes, revising themes, name themes, and finally coming up with a report. This study followed all steps required as stated by most qualitative writers Yin 2011, Creswell, 2013 and Braun and Clarke 2006 among others.

3.8.1 Thick Description, Data Transcription and Triangulation

Ideally qualitative research focuses on prolonged engagement with the research participants during interviews with the intention of obtaining a complete view of the phenomenon (Catherine and Rossman, 1990; Catherine and Rossman, 2011; Rossman and Rallis, 2012; Toma, 2000). I made sure that I was fully engaged with the participant in the discussion and spent between 70-90 minutes with each one. This made me gain his/her trust and allowed me to craft a suitable environment for them to discuss their experiences freely and openly as suggested by DiCicco-Bloom and Crabtree (2006) and Millward (2012). During the interview I took care of every interaction and process and reported them in such a way that the descriptions were “context-rich, meaningful and thick” as required in qualitative research and supported by studies (Geertz, 1973; Miles and Saldana, 2016; Hennink et al. 2011; Bailey, 2007). The study also found data transcription to be the best way to come up with a proper and coherent thick description.

The transcript from the field was carefully checked with the intention of generating insightful and meaningful data. Finally, I used the respondents' own narratives, words, and views in the text most often to make the descriptions not only thick but also lively in essence and I intensely immersed myself in every narrative so that novelty was maintained, and errors were kept to a minimum while translating them into English for the text. In order to improve the clarity and accuracy of the research findings, triangulation was used because my study had different kinds of participants, with more than one data-gathering method (Munby, 1983; Miles et al., 2016; Mapolisa and Tshabalala, 2013; Catherine and Rossman, 2011) have observed that the purpose of triangulation is to capture multi-faceted ways of looking at the same phenomenon. In this study I used multiple participants, and different methods of data collection as such triangulation was necessary.

3.9 Validity and Reliability

Yin (2011) and Maxwell (1992) stated that the qualitative research approach integrates strategies that ensure trustworthiness as a means of establishing validity and reliability, and this is far from the quantitative research approach which applies statistical methods. Lather (2001), Ihantola (2011), Onwuegbuzie and Leech (2007) and Patton (2002) established that achieving validity and reliability in qualitative requires controlling biases, proper record keeping, clear decision trail demonstration, consistency and transparency in interpretation, and demonstration of clarity. This study observed validity by following correct procedures during data collection, keeping records properly and interpreting the data. The study also gained from views of Durrheim (2006), Garner (2009) and Goddard and Melville (2004) by inviting participants to comment on the interview transcript and judge whether the final themes and concepts created adequately reflected the phenomena being investigated.

3.10 Ethical Considerations

Ethical issues are very important for social science research, and it is a consideration that moves across the whole research process, from research topic

determination to the results obtained after the study (Israel and Hay, 2006; Bailey, 2007). Research topic such as disability is so sensitive and can easily solicit emotions to the extent of make data collection and gathering difficult. Raymond (1990), Jan Coles et al. (2014) and Fontes (2004) observed such sensitive topics to create a lot of problems in dissemination of the research findings if the researcher is not keen. Siebers (2005), Sieber and Stanley (1988) and Bloor et al. (2010) found sensitivity to be heavily associated with some topics such as disability. In this study, sensitivity was associated with many things; disability as a phenomenon is seen as humiliating, the victims of disabilities including care givers usually find it shameful to reveal information about themselves, and cultural norms usually make it impossible to investigate more about disabled people. I therefore ensured the following guidelines was adhered to as discussed in studies by Braffman (1999), Ken Plummer (2002) and Ameen (2005); 1) obtained informed consent from the participants, 2) ensured that participation was entirely voluntary; 3) informed the participants of any risks involved in the research; 4) protected the privacy and confidentiality of all participants; and 5) ensured that participation would not cause any harm to the participants.

My study further adopted several specific steps as required for social research, and the study was reviewed by an independent research ethics committee from the university prior to the commencement of the data collection. The respondents were made to understand the nature of the research, they were informed that their participation was voluntary, and no form of compensation was expected. This was in line with studies by Gail (2004), Zvoleyko et al. (2016) and Racher (2004). Finally, the participants were made aware beforehand that their contribution would be used for earning a Ph.D. degree, and that perhaps some articles would be published from it. Additionally, the participants were alerted that their autonomy would be respected and that they could withdraw at any time. They were also informed that there would be no disclosure of any content discussed during the interview (Israel and Hay 2006, Yin, 2011; Silverman, 2000).

3.11 Conclusion

The present author managed the research process from start to completion. The idea of lived experiences as propagated by phenomenologists made the study come up

with true and proper reflections from the learners, their parents, teachers, principals, and education officers. This study was more flexible and accommodative because of the interpretative paradigm used. Despite trying to follow the procedures required for this type of study, some loopholes were unavoidable; the time span was less than expected-the daily record books were handed out in early July 2017 and by the time they were collected in October 2017, some learners had written some information that was difficult to comprehend, others used Braille, and as such reading and understanding the record books took a great deal of time. Planning to meet the parents also took time as the principal kept on postponing the meeting stating that the parents could not keep the date and time. My time for the research was also prolonged because of term dates and holidays. The data collection for the study lasted from July 2017 until January 2018. It is important to note that during that time the political temperature in Kenya was not favourable since it was an election period and anxiety was high. Despite this, the whole process went on well with all steps followed, and all participants turned up and were very positive. I carried out the transcription well, triangulated vividly and came up with context-rich, meaningful, and thick content.

CHAPTER 4

LIVED EXPERIENCES OF THE PARTICIPANTS

4.1 Introduction

The results of the phenomenological data findings are presented in the form of seventeen case studies that include a thematic description of the participants' experiences. These entailed 9 learners, 3 principals, 3 parents, and 2 education officers from 2 counties. Eighteen teachers in 3 different focus groups, each comprising 6 teachers also participated in the study. Each case presentation begins with an overview of the participants, and then various experiences such as experience with the curriculum, support, experience with existing infrastructural facilities, and the general learning environment follow. The selected themes are discussed in depth while focusing on how policies are implemented by various stakeholders. This approach is founded on the basis that people can understand other people's experiences through interaction and listening to what they say (Kelly, 2006; Terre Blanche and Kelly 1999; Riccucci, 2010).

In essence phenomenology provides an opportunity for individuals to share their life experiences in order to shed light on previously-misunderstood, unknown, or discounted issues, beliefs or values (Bogdan et al., 1992; Zeeck, 2013). A variety of experiences are provided to help the reader understand the research participants. Quotations allow the participants to speak for themselves, providing multiple perspectives. In addition, writing narratives in this manner helps the researcher and the reader comprehend the circumstantial factors that may have influenced the participants' experiences.

The data analysis process began by coding the transcripts from the digital audio recording of the participants' interviews. The data coding was done broadly; coding an extremely large number of transcripts. The objective of coding the recorded transcripts at the beginning of the analysis was to make it easier to organize and interpret the results. Braun and Clarke (2006), Yin (2011) and Tashakkori and Teddlie (2003)

claimed that isolating various stages in data analysis include getting used to data from the field, coming up with codes, and carefully identifying the emerging themes. At the start of the coding process, it was difficult to place an individuals' experience relevant to what could be worth noting. Consequently, each transcript seemed to be littered with possible codes initially. As the process continued, patterns slowly materialized, and some codes were repeated to perfectly capture the experience passed by the participants. The theme and coding grid that I used to organize the data provided chromatic glues to the outlines. I had a wide range of experiences from the daily reports, interviews, and from observation. Some were difficult to understand while others were easier considering the levels of disability and the clarity of the participants' narration. After the reduction, the codes were assigned a corresponding theme that attempted to capture the essence of the codes and reflected the communicated experiences of the participants. The greatest challenge at this point was selecting a name for the theme that adequately captured the described essence of the communicated experience. This theme also needed to parallel the experiences communicated in the interview. Deciding on a name for each code and subsequent theme was an iterative process of adjusting the name and comparing it to the transcript to determine if it still accurately portrayed the aspect of the phenomenon.

Table 4.1 Research Participants

Name	Gender	Participant	ToD	Institution	G S	KoP	O S
Jacky	F	LLWD	B	Nico Hauser	E	None	Y
John	M	LLWD	B	Nico Hauser	L	None	P O
Moss	M	LLWD	A	Nico Hauser	L	None	Y
Norbert	M	LLWD	D	Father Ouderaa	E	None	Y
Edward	M	LLWD	D	Father Ouderaa	E	None	Y
Anita	F	LLWD	D	Father Ouderaa	L	None	Y
Mercy	F	LLWD	H	St. George S.S	L	None	PO
Stanley	M	LLWD	H	St.George S.S	E	None	Y
David	M	LLWD	H	St.George S.S	L	None	PO
Roko	M	Parent	N/A	St George S.S	N/A	M	N/A
Selly	F	Parent	B	Nico Hauser	N/A	None	N/A
Lidbro	F	Parent	N/A	Father Ouderaa	N/A	None	N/A
Richard	M	Principal	N/A	St.George S. S	N/A	M	N/A
Horrins	M	Principal	N/A	Father Ouderaa	N/A	M	N/A

Name	Gender	Participant	ToD	Institution	G S	KoP	O S
Jacinta	F	Principal	N/A	Nico Hauser	N/A	M	N/A
Oduor	M	Education Officer	N/A	Kisumu County	N/A	E	N/A
Otunga	M	Education Officer	N/A	Siaya County	N/A	E	N/A
Owuor	M	Teacher	N/A	St George S. S	N/A	VL	N/A
Mrs	F	Teacher	N/A	St George S. S	N/A	VL	N/A
Odhiambo							
Miss Akusa	F	Teacher	N/A	St George S. S	N/A	VL	N/A
Mr Okoth	M	Teacher	N/A	St George S. S	N/A	VL	N/A
Mr Ogola	M	Teacher	N/A	St George S. S	N/A	VL	N/A
Miss Akinyi	F	Teacher	N/A	St George S. S	N/A	VL	N/A
Mr Omondi	M	Teacher	N/A	Nico Hauser	N/A	VL	N/A
Miss Aoko	F	Teacher	N/A	Nico Hauser	N/A	VL	N/A
Mr	M	Teacher	N/A	Nico Hauser	N/A	VL	N/A
Methuselah							
Miss Akoth	F	Teacher	N/A	Nico Hauser	N/A	VL	N/A
Mr Otieno	M	Teacher	N/A	Nico Hauser	N/A	VL	N/A
Mr Oyoo	M	Teacher	N/A	Nico Hauser	N/A	VL	N/A
Mrs Owino	F	Teacher	N/A	Father Ouderaa	N/A	VL	N/A
Miss Careen	M	Teacher	N/A	Father Ouderaa	N/A	VL	N/A
Mr Oloo	M	Teacher	N/A	Father Ouderaa	N/A	VL	N/A
Mrs Oluoch	F	Teacher	N/A	Father Ouderaa	N/A	VL	N/A
Mr Vincent	M	Teacher	N/A	Father Ouderaa	N/A	VL	N/A
Mr Domnic	M	Teacher	N/A	Father Ouderaa	N/A	VL	N/A

Key: **M** – Male, **F**. Female. **LLWD** - Learners Living With Disability, **T.o.D** - Type of Disability, **B** – Blind, **A** – Albino, **D** – Deaf, **H** – Handicap, **N/A** – Not Applicable, **G. S** –Government Support, **E** – Early support provided, **L** – Late support provided, **K. o. P** – Knowledge of policy, **None** – Totally no ideas, **V. L** – Very little, **M** – Moderate, **E** – Enough, **O. S** – Other Support, **Y** – Yes, **P. O** – Parent only.

4.2 First Group of Participants – Learners Living with Disability

4.2.1 Experiences of participant A: Jacky

4.2.1.1 Overview of the Participant

Participant A, who I called Jacky, was a girl in her early teens. Jacky studies at Nico Hauser Special Secondary School for the visually impaired. The school is situated in Bondo, Siaya County. I interviewed the student in one of the classrooms in the school compound and noted that she was totally blind. We had a detailed conversation about

her experiences during childhood, the learning environment, and school life as well as her experiences and challenges with the existing curriculum.

4.2.1.2 Experiences during Childhood

Jacky narrated her experience growing up as a child living with a disability. She expressed herself openly and gave detailed information on how difficult it was for her and her mother, who was also blind, to access basic needs such as food. She had gathered some of the information from her diary about two months prior to the interview. She narrated the following: “I was born blind; my mother and other four siblings are also blind. The cause of my blindness is not known because my mother never took me to hospital. She however informed me that it was an inheritance from the family gene. I have accepted myself this way and life seems normal to me. My childhood experience was not so good, I had to walk with my mother wherever she was going to look for food. Imagine, two blind people following one another guided by sticks! It was hectic.

Growing up with a disability and in abject poverty was a difficult experience for Jacky. A combination of these two factors denied her a chance to enjoy her childhood like other children. Despite her tender age, she could clearly note the lack of acceptance from the society; “I used to walk with my mother to beg for food. Sometimes we would be given food while other times we would be abused and asked to leave. In some instances, people would just throw items at us like we were lesser beings. We were not shown love at all”. Cultural beliefs about people living with a disability made the situation worse for Jacky and her family. Her father left them when he realized that they were all blind because he feared the community’s perception of disability: “In the village I had no friends; no toys to play with like other children, and no one wanted to associate with us. My family was also poor. I saw my father briefly in life before he left us when he found that all of us were blind”. Jacky’s childhood experiences as a child living with this disability brought out various issues including parental awareness and support, cultural beliefs on disability, and acceptance by society.

4.2.1.3 Learning Environment and School Life

The trajectory of the conversation with Jacky then took the direction of her school life and the learning environment: “My mother took me to a regular primary school. The idea was good to me because my other siblings were also in school far from

home. My mother did not know the required documents for admission into the school, so she just took me to the school and left me there hoping that I would be allowed to learn like the other children. However, the school administration sent me back home to go for documents which we didn't know how to find. My mother tried looking for them but could not succeed. The situation was made worse by the fact that both my mother and I are blind and there was very little or no support from other people. I just persisted and continued going to school without the documents". Here, Jacky presents a situation where ease of entry and access to education, which are a basic human right, were difficult for her as a child living with a disability. Jacky's mother was also not aware of the existence of special schools that could offer a favourable learning environment for her blind daughter. Lack of support from the community and the school system in terms of providing information and guidance were also an impediment.

Jacky's experience in her first school was characterized by loneliness and various challenges resulting from her inability to see: "Inside the school compound was lonely to me. I had no friend and the teachers were not bothered about me. They were busy with their daily teaching activities with very little or no regard to my situation. The curriculum was more centred on normal learners which made it very difficult for me to cope with unlike the other children". The situation made it difficult for her to learn because she was clearly in an environment that was extremely unfavourable for her: "The children on the other hand were interested in abusing and making fun of me. I had a difficult time".

Jacky also narrated how the infrastructure was a major challenge in her first school; the facilities at the school were unfavourable to her condition, as she indicated in the following: "I had nobody to direct or support me. Sometimes, I would miss classes because there was nobody to guide me to the classroom. I could only access the classroom when directed because I could not locate it with my walking stick". The facilities in the school were only favourable to normal learners and therefore Jacky had to really struggle to cope with the challenges.

The turning point for Jacky was when she finally got a chance to join a special school. She recalls how her mother, through a local politician and influential persons supported her to attend. The opportunity was life changing for her. Although she had to adjust to the new environment and a new way of doing things, she noted that life was

much better: “I had to learn to use braille and become accustomed to other visual learning requirements. I started getting formal education, could now go to class with others, and be tested through exams. The teachers were good and very understanding. I had many friends whom I could confide in and share my experiences with. Everyone was friendly and the environment was good for me”.

Jacky then proceeded to secondary school where she currently studies. She narrated how life is even better there: “I joined Nico Hauser secondary school as a grown-up girl and knew what education is. I found school life enjoyable and I knew how to use learning facilities that are suitable for my condition”. Having had a chance to be in a special primary school, Jacky enjoyed a smooth transition into it. Indeed, learners living with a disability can enjoy school life when they have a good support system and a learning environment that is favourable to their situation, as Jacky indicated in the following: “I know how to talk well and make friends, and I also share experiences with my friends and we enjoy life. Given that the school is sponsored by the Catholic Church, so many facilities are provided on top of government provision. I am able to access and use walking canes, braille, typewriters, and be guided by trained support staff. The school takes very good care of us fully and understands our needs. I have also learnt religion in the school and through that I have made many more friends”.

4.2.1.4 Curriculum, Government Participation, and Challenges

I then engaged Jacky on issues to do with the curriculum, challenges faced, and the support they get from the government. On the curriculum, Jacky’s description of the challenges points to a gap in the existing curriculum in terms of accommodating the special learning needs of learners living with a disability. This was particularly a serious hindrance in her primary education, as she demonstrates in the following direct script: “I find some part of the curriculum not suitable for learners like me. The routine and the structure of learning does not favour me well because of the timing as well as the delivery of the curriculum content. Most subjects require me to have sight. Testing at the laboratory, mathematical symbols, agriculture, and home sciences practical are difficult to learn when one is not able to see”. This is the main challenge that Jacky faces in her current stage of learning (secondary school). Although it is a special school that provides a very friendly environment for learners living with a disability like hers,

gaps in the curriculum and structure of learning are still evident, as indicated in the following statements: “I had a serious problem in my first primary school. Teachers were more concerned with completing the syllabus and gave little attention to ensuring that learners living with disability like me understood the concepts. They strictly followed the normal approach of content delivery and could not make a decision to improvise ways of accommodating the special learning needs to students like me”. When she got a chance to join a special primary school, the situation improved drastically but curriculum-related challenges were still evident: “In my second school, the situation was better given that teachers were caring and paid special attention to our special learning needs. As students, we could also sit and discuss because everyone was friendly. However, Mathematics was a big challenge. There were many mathematical formulas and I could neither see nor understand”.

At Hauser Secondary School, where she currently studies, Jacky noted that practical-oriented subjects, subjects that require demonstrations, and lack of enough teachers, are the main challenges she is facing. It is difficult for her to understand certain concepts because she cannot physically see what the concept is all about. On government support, Jacky noted that there is sufficient support since she is in a special school: “There is total support. School fees and most of my personal needs are paid for. My mom is relieved and happy. I think if more teachers and facilities can be added, then learners living with disability like me will be able to learn well and have a bright future”.

In summary, this is typical case of a child living with a disability who has faced numerous challenges since her childhood owing to a lack of awareness by her mother, lack of support from her father, cultural beliefs about persons living with a disability, an unfavourable learning environment, an unfavourable curriculum, and lack of support from the community. It is also evident that teachers lack the ability to make decisions on how to accommodate the special needs of learners like Jacky. The teachers are simply executing the curriculum as instructed by their employer without the authority to “bend the rules” and attend to special needs of their learners.

4.2.2 Experiences of Participant B: John

4.2.2.1 Overview of the Participant

Participant B, who I will refer to as John, is a very young boy in form one. My conversation with John was not very easy due to his uneasiness. In many cases I had to refer to his daily record. John is physically disabled. I was interested in a deep understanding of his experiences growing up as a child living with a disability as well as his experiences in school, and some were indicated in the following statements of his: “My parents are both working as civil servants and therefore life was quite good for me while growing up. They took good care of me and provided for my basic needs. When my parents discovered that my eyesight was not normal, they took me to the doctor who then discovered that my eye’s optic nerve was damaged, and therefore I would not be able to see”.

4.2.2.2 Experiences during Childhood

John also had his fair share of challenges while growing up. Despite the good support he enjoyed from both parents, John could not enjoy his childhood like other children: “My child life was not good at all. I was unable to do what other children were doing and could not participate in childhood games like the other children. I felt out of place and therefore I spent most of my time in the house to avoid the embarrassment”. John also narrated his constant encounter with abuse from other children and the adults that he came across: “I could hear people blaming my parents for loss of my sight. They used to say that my father went to a magician to make me blind so that he could acquire wealth. No one in the society wanted to be associated with me. Generally, my childhood was full of challenges despite the love and support I received from my parents”.

4.2.2.3 Learning Environment and School Life

John’s parents took him to a normal school despite his disability. This was probably due to a lack of awareness on their part. John stated the following in connection with this school: “I found myself in school because of my parents’ initiative to take me to school. However, the regular school they considered to be very good for learning was not favourable for me. I could not fit in the daily routine”. John explained how he was asked to find another school because the teachers were unable to attend to his special needs. Due to the numerous challenges in the school, John had to find a special one: “I was told to look for another school because the teachers were unable to

attend to me due to their training background. The children were also very unfriendly and could not offer me the support that I really needed from them. They made fun of me and abused me. Others even misled me whenever I asked to be guided to a particular place in the school”.

John’s parents wanted to keep him at the school and therefore they tried to persuade the teachers to allow him to continue there. However, it was difficult for the school to allow John to continue learning at that institution because they lacked special facilities to support learners living with a disability. In addition, the teachers were not trained in how to handle learners like John and were also not empowered to make decisions on how to attend to John.

Eventually, John’s parents found a special school for him, as described by John: “Due to the challenges in my first school, my parents took me to a private special school. Life in the new school was much better and the learning environment was favourable for me. Teachers were well trained to attend to my special learning needs, facilities were available, and learners were friendly, supportive and happy to accommodate me given that they were also blind or partially blind”. The new environment enabled John to study well and he was able to sit for his final examinations in Standard Eight, which enabled him to join Nico Hauser Secondary School, as he indicated in the following: “I am now comfortable and have a future. I can use brail comfortably and I understand many concepts in life as a result of the education that I have acquired here. This secondary school has made learn to love everyone and has made me a better person. The school is sponsored by the Catholic Church and is headed by a Catholic Sister”.

4.2.2.4 Curriculum, Government Participation, and Challenges

The study also sought to understand John’s experience related to the curriculum and government support. On the curriculum, John noted that the subjects, timing, and examinations in the three schools he had attended were similar: “I realised that the curriculum is the same except that the teachers are different. The facilities were also different. In my first school, the mathematics class was too difficult because it involved many formulas and symbols which I could not see. English and Kiswahili classes were also hard due lack of references after class. Other subjects were equally complicated because the teaching methods did not favour learners with physical disability like me.

The second primary school was a special school and therefore although the curriculum was the same, the teaching was tailored to suit learners with disability. I was able to understand most of the concepts due to the availability of trained teachers, enough facilities and a friendly learning environment in general”. However, despite the favourable environment and availability of facilities in John’s second primary school, the subjects that involved the use of many symbols and those that involved physical demonstrations were a major challenge. This was because John could not see what the teacher was demonstrating and had to rely on braille.

About the experience in his current secondary school, John stated the following: “I find the curriculum unfavourable for me in most science subjects. I have no problems with languages or arts-related subjects. I also don’t have a problem with the school routine in this special school. However, teachers are not enough to teach effectively”. John also noted that there has been little government support for him: “I have been supported all through by my parents. My hospital bills, primary school fees and other basic needs were all paid for by my parents. However, in this secondary school, I get government support like other learners living with disability here. The support from the government is complemented by support from the Catholic Church”.

The discussion with John shows how all schools need to have trained teachers in special education to enable them to attend to learners living with a disability like John. Other issues that came out of this discussion included the insufficient number of trained teachers in special schools, lack of awareness, unfavourable curricula, especially in the sciences, the perceptions about people living with a disability, parental and community support, as well as decision-making at the lowest level of the education system.

4.2.3 Experiences of Participant C: Moss

4.2.3.1 Overview of the Participant

Participant C, whom I nicknamed Moss, is living with albinism: “I was born this way. That is what my parents told me. Few months after my birth my skin was turning pail instead of black. My parents knew that my situation was hereditary and therefore they had no reason to take me to hospital for examination and diagnosis. However, my eyesight was not clear, and I later went to the hospital for medical attention. I still visit the eye clinic to date”.

4.2.3.2 Experiences during Childhood

The conversation with Moss then focussed on his experiences while growing up as a child living with albinism: “My experience as a child was not easy. I remember being called “Mzungu muafrika” translated as “European African” by adults and fellow children. This is abusive language people use to mock albinos like me even to now. I have never been comfortable due to the abuses and serious cultural stereotypes that the society places on people like me. I remember my parents hiding me because there was a time some witchdoctors were looking for some parts of an albino’s body to use as medicine. During that time, I could not go to school and I had to be out of the society’s sight. We still hear of such cases even today, where some people believe that certain body parts of people living with Albinism are of medicinal value. This causes a lot of stigma for us. My childhood life was therefore miserable because I was unable to do what other children were doing freely. I lived in fear and low self-esteem”. Moss looked emotional as he described his unfortunate situation.

4.2.3.3 Learning Environment and School Life

Moss then took me through the journey of his early education and what his learning environment was like. He started his narration by stating the following: “I learnt in four primary schools before joining this school. My special needs were not taken care of in most of the primary schools I attended. The first school I attended was in a hot area. My parents liked it because of its good academic performance but did not consider the nature of my skin and sight. I remember visiting the hospital several times because my skin was developing some black spots which would then turn into wounds. I later transferred to the second school. However, the teachers in the second school were unwilling to help me and failed to understand my special needs. They could not consider the fact that I could not see from far and that I needed to sit near the board to see the writings properly. There was very little support from everyone in the school. Learning was hard in this school and I could no longer withstand the constant abuses and discrimination. I left for the third school and the experience was also terrible. The children were full of indiscipline and used to carry crude weapons to school which they would then use to intimidate other children like us. I was always threatened by my fellow learners, some even threatened to kill me. I had to leave that school immediately because I feared for my life”.

Joining the fourth school was a big relief for Moss. Having gone through a gruesome experience in his three previous schools, the last thing he wanted was a similar experience in the fourth school: “The fourth school was a very good school and that where I finished my primary education. The teachers and learners were accommodative and very friendly to me. Although there were a few challenges associated with me being the only learner living with albinism in the school, I managed to sail through successfully and proceeded to secondary school”.

Moss’ experience in school shows how society’s perception of people living with albinism, discrimination, lack of support from fellow learners and the school system, lack of awareness of albinism, and lack of grassroots-level decision-making greatly affect access to education by learners living with albinism.

4.2.3.4 Curriculum, Government Participation, and Challenges

Moss faced fewer challenges with the curriculum and the general structure of learning because he could see, hear, and speak: “The rigorous routine of the school program was not a serious problem to me. I could walk to classes, read and write like others. The only problem was seeing objects that were far from me and small writings”. However, because his eyesight is not perfect, he requires a substantial amount of time to read and write. He has to spend a lot of time reading and counter checking the learning material, which sometimes is a disadvantage for him in relation to other learners: “Other normal learners finish their work far much ahead of me and in most cases I clashed with teachers for wasting their time. During examinations, I usually don’t finish on time because I take long to read and understand the questions unlike other learners who have an upper hand. I am always behind. I think the curriculum does not have special consideration for learners like me. The curriculum assumes that I have the exact same ability as the normal learners”.

At Nico Hauser, the situation is much better for Moss. The school understands his special needs and provides a favourable environment: “Most of the students are like me and our teachers are patient and always ready to wait. However, in some subjects where strict measurement, or identifying an exact colour is required, I am always marked wrong. I however pity my fellow learner who doesn’t see at all”.

On support and government involvement, Moss noted that the Catholic Church, the Constituency Development Fund (CDF), and the county government supported his

school through the construction of classrooms. He also noted that politicians are usually supportive, especially during the campaign period, as he indicated in the following: “The church and the government are doing a lot for the school”. On an individual basis, Moss noted that government support has been minimal; however, his parents have been fully supportive since his early education. He also pointed out the lack of sufficient teachers as one of the main challenges in the schools he has attended.

The experiences of Moss bring out the challenges that learners living with a disability go through in their attempt to access education. We have seen the perception that the society has of people living with albinism and how failure by various schools to give attention to their special needs frustrates their quest for education. Discrimination and social stigmatization are also evident from his experiences. In addition, the curriculum does not incorporate the specific needs of this group of learners. Instead, they are mostly treated like other “normal” learners.

In conclusion, the experiences of these three learners highlight the situation in which learners with visual problems find themselves in the society. Their early childhood and school life are not fully supported by policymakers or implementers given the way that the curriculum is structured, there are few infrastructural facilities available, and the human resources are inadequate. Only teachers see them through most of their problems but cannot make serious decisions concerning serious matters that are outside their scope under government regulations. The government provision at the early stage of their lives is not well structured in terms of support procedures. Other critical factors such as lack of awareness, societal beliefs, and lack of support from parents and teachers greatly hinder their access to quality education. The magnitude to which they are humiliated by fellow children and adults, including some teachers, is worrying and requires urgent intervention.

Table 4.2 Visual disable learners views on a sorted theme

Themes/ Names	Jacky	John	Moss
Nature of (VI)	Total blind	Total blind	Albino (PB)
Type supportive gadget	Walk stick	Walk stick	Glasses
Cause disability	Inheritance	Glaucoma	Inheritance
Parental support	Minimal	Full	Full
Society Acceptance	Not fully	Not fully	Not fully
Parent awareness of school	No	Yes	Yes
Who give most support	Teacher	Teacher	Teacher
Any other group support	Catholic	Catholic	Catholic
Govt intervention	Early	Late	Late
Experience with curriculum	Unfavourable	Unfavourable	Fair
Infrastructure / facilities	Inadequate	Inadequate	Inadequate
Learning challenges	A lot	A lot	Moderate

4.2.4 Experiences of Participant D: Norbert

4.2.4.1 Overview of the Participant

Participant D, whom I will refer to as Norbert, is a deaf learner at Fr. Ouderaa School for the Deaf in Siaya County. Throughout my conversation with Norbert, I was supported by a sign language interpreter. Here are his words about his early life: “My early childhood was very difficult for me. I was born in a hospital in Kisumu city. My mother told me that I was born before time, and therefore she had to stay at the hospital for many months taking care of me. The doctors tried to correct my deafness during that time but could not manage to reverse my inability to hear”.

4.2.4.2 Experiences during Childhood

I engaged Norbert in discussing his experience growing up as a deaf child. I was interested in understanding the level of support from his parents and the community and his awareness among other factors. Here is further information from him about the society in which he grew up: “The society was not kind to me at all. I was forced to live with my grandmother since my father was against me living together with them. My

father wanted me to go far away from them and did not want to be associated with me in any way. My mother decided to take me to her mother where I got a new home. I am told that I started living with my grandmother when I was about one year old. My mother had nothing to offer but kept on coming to support me. As I grew up, I came to learn that I could not talk unlike other children who were talking and laughing. I was unable to utter any word so I only used my hands to communicate through sign language. Outside, people were hostile. I could clearly tell that they were abusing me even through the signs that they made at me. Both children and adults were disrespectful to me and could even throw stones at me as a way of getting my attention. It was a terrible experience. My grandmother was however very supportive. She was the only person I could run to for support. She always defended me and sacrificed many things to make sure I was comfortable and happy. Being serious member of the Catholic Church, she introduced me to church where I felt welcomed and loved. The church treated me well and supported me”.

4.2.4.3 Learning Environment and School Life

Nobert’s early school life was very difficult since he was deaf and finding a special school that could suit his special needs was a challenge: “The school befitting me was difficult to find in my locality. In fact, no one believed that such a school could exist. However, my grandmother always had me in mind and kept on inquiring for a special school that I could join”. Norbert narrated how in one of his mother’s weekly Catholic Church group meetings, called “Jumuia,” his mother got information from a Catholic Sister (nun) about a suitable school for him: “My grandmother consulted my mother, who then rushed to the nearest Ministry of Education offices to ask about the school. I found myself in the school system after some process involving the Ministry of Education, children office, and the Catholic Church. I feared school life during my first days because I was used to the village life. I was surprised to find out that all the children in my school had some form of deafness. I was relieved because I could associate with them and would no longer be stigmatized. The next problem was how to cope up with the routine of school life. Adjusting to the new life full of rules and regulations was a challenge but the teachers and fellow children were supportive”.

Nobert gradually got used to the strict school routine and its rules and regulations. He noted that the teachers were very understanding and supportive.

However, the number of special teachers was inadequate to handle the special needs of all the children. He stated that the “[c]hildren were respectful to one another and the general environment was very good. Each learner had at least one assistive device to support them in the learning process. I passed the national examinations after studying for eight years in that primary school and got selected to this school. Here I find school life favourable just like in my previous school. However, I think the learners here are fewer compared to my primary school. In addition, interaction at personal level is high. There are sign language translators, and the teachers are very committed to attending to learners although they are inadequate in number”.

4.2.4.4 Curriculum, Government Participation, and Challenges

Having been to special schools at both primary and secondary levels, Norbert explained his experience with the curriculum and how supportive the government has been: “Teachers are very important for my learning. However, some subjects are totally abstract to me. For instance, when it is time for English or Kiswahili, life sometimes becomes difficult because I cannot talk nor hear. I rely on a translator or a sign language interpreter. Languages are very difficult to learn. I am always comfortable with practical subjects including sciences and Mathematics provided teachers explain and demonstrate them well. I am good in using my eyes and I can remember and understand better when lessons involve charts, formulas, and drawings”. On government support, Norbert noted that the government has been quite supportive throughout his education. Through the Ministry of Education and the Catholic Church, he was able to join a special primary school, albeit after a long search. Through this support, he managed to complete primary school and was admitted to his current secondary school. Other groups such as the Children’s Office have also provided some support, though minimal: “I know that the government employ teachers and develops the curriculum. The government also provides facilities to support our special learning needs”. On challenges, Norbert noted that the lack of adequate facilities and equipment is still a challenge. The number of specially-trained teachers that can adequately support the learners is also inadequate. This hinders optimal access to quality learning by learners like Norbert.

In conclusion, Norbert’s experience shows how learners living with a disability seem to waste away in villages due to a lack of information and lack of concern and

support by parents and the community. Nobert was disowned by his father due to the fear of community perceptions and cultural beliefs about persons living with a disability. His experience also shows the importance of religious bodies in supporting children living with a disability and how their networks can be useful in disseminating information about support structures and opportunities for learners living with a disability.

4.2.5 Experiences of Participant E: Edward

4.2.5.1 Overview of the Participant

Participant E, whom I will refer to as Edward, is a deaf learner at Fr. Ouderaa School for the Deaf in Siaya County. During the entire interview, a sign language interpreter supported me. Here is Edward on the cause of his illness and other related matters: “I am not certain what caused my deafness, but my grandmother tells me it was due to an auditory processing disorder which could not be treated in the hospitals she visited. I am not fully deaf, I can hear you if you shout, I can also read your lips to understand what you are saying. I was born out of wedlock and my mother had to leave me with my grandmother so that she could get a husband. I think she feared that no man would marry her if he discovered that she had a disabled child”.

4.2.5.2 Experiences during Childhood

Edward’s experience while growing up was also full of challenges. He faced abuse and discrimination by his fellow children and the community in general, as can be seen in the following statement from him: “As a child I was not loved by my fellow children at all. I also felt out of place because I could not do things at their pace. I could not hear them well whenever they talked. I had a frustrating experience while playing with them until I decided to withdraw from their company. Some children knew about my disability but they still abused and made fun at me. The adults also treated me as a useless person who could not even be sent to deliver any message. Life was so hard but my grandmother continued showing me love and support. Hatred was all over my surrounding. I remember my grandmother would follow me wherever I went because she feared that I would be abused or even beaten”.

When Edward reached school-going age, his grandmother took him to a regular school: “Once I joined the school, I remember other children would wait for me on the way just to abuse me through abusive traditional songs. I had a rough time in school

also because the teachers and school administrators could not understand my language well. The learning environment was extremely unfavourable for me. I ended up opting out of the school due to the unbearable conditions. After being persuaded by my grandmother, I decided to go back to the school. However, the school administration did not allow me back. I was therefore forced to stay out of school for about one year. Later, a certain organization that I can't remember clearly, visited my grandmother's house to try and trace me. Through the organization together with the Children's Office and the Ministry of Education, I joined a special school,"

4.2.5.3 Learning Environment and School Life

I further engaged Edward in a detailed conversation about his school life and what his learning environment has been like: "I was very unstable in my first school; the surrounding community influenced my school life. Teachers were so unfriendly that they could not stop other learners from making fun of me. My everyday attempt to sit in front of class in order to hear the teacher well or read their lips at a closer range was thwarted by learners who never wanted to see me in front of them. Learners were very abusive. I found all teachers to be the same in this school, none of them was interested in asking me how I was fairing on with my studies or whether I was facing any challenges. They all treated me like other normal children. The school even lacked assistive devices to support me. For instance, there was no loud speaker in the classroom. I could go back home without learning anything. Life in that school was very difficult".

Having dropped out of his first school due to the unfavourable learning environment, Edward's second school was a great relief for him, as he indicates in the following: "In my second school, life changed to the better. Nearly all children had some issues with either their ears or could not speak. We would use sign language among ourselves to communicate effectively. Teachers were friendly and at least here, the official language for communication was sign language. Though my grandmother was not aware of existence of such a school, she could not believe how comfortable I was when she came visiting. I was very encouraged by the availability of assistive devices in the school. I could use speakers to mediate my speech and was also given earphones. In my current school, I find life to be even better because there is personalised attention from teachers and the school administration for all learners.

Despite the fact that teachers are few, I am quite comfortable because we have all books and most of the equipment are available especially for deaf learners like me. The teachers are also very committed and supportive”.

4.2.5.4 Curriculum, Government Participation, and Challenges

Edward then described the curriculum-related challenges he has faced and the intervention/support he received from the government. On the curriculum, he pointed out some specific challenges, especially with language subjects: “Learning English and Kiswahili have never been friendly to me. I don’t understand these languages when the teacher speaks unless when translated well with sign language. There should be away of writing sign language so that we don’t learn one language in another; let books of sign languages be provided too. I am good in maths because there is no much speaking. I enjoy reading but at times don’t understand because of poor translation. I think that is what makes me fail in some subjects. I enjoy subjects that involve demonstrations such as Agriculture although sometimes the explanations given by the teacher are not very clear to me so I end up doing something wrongly. In general, I can say that the main challenge with the curriculum for me is the language barrier”.

On government support, Edward noted that there are major gaps that still need to be addressed: “The government to some extent has failed; I recall not getting accommodated in a regular school because of teachers’ inability and poor understanding of learners like me. The teachers lacked training in special education. I think my staying out of school for one year was too much if the government was serious about me. I wondered why at the age of my grandmother, she was not aware of special schools for the deaf. On the other side, I can say that the government has supported me a lot, without Human Rights Groups and education officers, I would have been at home now. My school fees, personal needs, and even the teachers who teach me are provided by the government and the Catholic Church”.

Edward however expressed serious concern about the high turnover rate of specially-trained teachers. He noted that he develops a very good relationship with his teachers but they leave after a short while due to salary issues or transfers. This is very disruptive for learners because getting used to a new teacher and forming a good bond with him or her take time.

Edward's experiences bring out some fundamental issues that are important for this study. Clearly, lack of acceptance from the society, discrimination, cultural beliefs about disability, lack of awareness and support, lack of adequate facilities, unfavourable curricula, inadequate teachers and inadequate government support are evident. It is also evident that the government is not doing enough to be in touch with the grassroots and has not empowered the school administration officers at the grassroots level to make decisions regarding the treatment of learners living with a disability. Therefore, it takes time before the problems facing learners living with a disability can be addressed. For Edward, it took a whole year.

4.2.6 Experiences of Participant F: ANITA

4.2.6.1 Overview of the Participant

Participant F, nicknamed Anita, is a deaf girl in school at Fr. Ouderaa School for the Deaf in Siaya County. In this interview, I was assisted by a sign language interpreter. I asked her whether she knew the cause of her deafness and she stated the following: "I don't remember asking my mother the cause of my deafness, but I can recall her saying that she spent a lot of her time with me in hospital when I was young. I can hear a bit and speak some words though I am not audible. I think the hospital could not manage to help me speak like you. I lived with my parents mostly and they were supportive and loving. However, when all attempts by the hospital to salvage my ability to speak and hear properly had failed, my parents really feared the perception by the community. They did not allow me to leave the house due to the fear of what people would say about our family".

4.2.6.2 Experiences during Childhood

Anita's early childhood was characterized by negative community perception and lack of acceptance, as she indicated in the following: "Being a disabled person in a family where traditions are valued is a big problem. I remember being kept in the house during a good part of my childhood because my parents were hiding me from the glare of community. When my father realized that the community had known that he has a disabled child, he married another wife. In the village, I decided to stay away from many people except very few friends whom I had met through my mother. I lived a lonely life because I could not associate with many people. I never used to play with

other children because they would make fun of me. I preferred staying indoors and playing with my mother”.

Anita’s life however improved later when the few friends she had identified started learning sign language. She described them as real friends because they understood her and supported her. She could play with them and she was able to enjoy childhood like other children. However, she has never forgotten how her father treated her as an outcast because of her disability.

4.2.6.3 Learning Environment and School Life

Anita also faced numerous challenges when she started her school life. She was taken to a normal school, which was unfavourable for her: “I was always quiet, very few children could notice me. I never used to play a lot since I could not relate well with other children. I felt out of place. In class, I used to sit in front of the class so that I could at least manage to hear some words from teachers. I was lucky because teachers were not bothered to ask me questions. I think they perceived me as one of those stupid children in class”.

Anita continued to talk about how she survived in her primary school without any special attention or facilities to support learners like her: “I did not know that there exist special equipment or facilities for deaf learners; I didn’t see any assistive device to support learners like me throughout my primary education. I simply survived. When I passed my examinations in Standard Eight, I was again selected to join a regular secondary school. Upon following up, I was told that during the selection for secondary schools’ places, teachers assumed I was normal and therefore did not specify to the ministry that I was deaf. They also didn’t imagine that I was going to make it to secondary school. I had to join the regular secondary school since I didn’t have an alternative. My mother helped me with the admission process and I started learning. However, it was not long before the challenges started manifesting themselves again. The learning environment was completely unbearable. Students were rude and would even force me to talk otherwise I would be beaten. I dropped out after a long month of abuses, beatings, and forceful manual work. Through my mother’s efforts, and with the help of the Catholic Church, I managed to join this special secondary school”.

She continued with a discussion of how things changed when she joined a special secondary school: “Joining a special secondary school was huge a relief for me;

I noticed a lot of changes in the learning environment and the general school life. Here there are many supportive devices which are helpful to me both in the classroom and for personal use outside class. I can always get a sign language interpreter when I fail to understand something clearly. The classrooms are well set with speakers to ease my learning. In this school all learners have some degree of deafness. I can say we are all the same, no abuses, discrimination or intimidation at all. We support each other and love one another. The teachers are more concerned about me and always check my books and assistive devices to make sure they are functioning properly. I feel loved and appreciated”.

4.2.6.4 Curriculum, Government Participation, and Challenges

I asked Anita about her experience with the curriculum and the challenges she has faced: “I think the subjects taught at primary level are not complicated for me compared to the subjects in secondary school. Though there are two languages taught and tested, the setting style of exams at primary level makes it easier to answer the questions even if a learner’s understanding of English or Kiswahili is poor. However, writing English composition and ‘Insha’ was a challenge”.

Anita suggested that the primary school curriculum should consider incorporating sign language expressions in order to enhance the delivery of content to learners living with a disability. Anita remembers how difficult it was for her to grasp some concepts due to her inability to hear properly. She also noted that it was always difficult to participate in activities that did not involve writing or demonstrations as the modes of instruction. She was forced to just imitate what other children were doing.

About her experience with the curriculum in her current school, she narrated the following: “Here in secondary school I find the curriculum even more complicated despite having a good learning environment. I must learn a lot of English and Kiswahili reading because of set books; some of the words are hard and there are no much pictures in them to demonstrate or show the meanings. I must rely on teachers and translators to understand every page which is difficult given that we are many in class. In addition, most subjects require a teacher to be beside me or use sign language to that I understand. This is sometimes very difficult because there are many learners in class. I have had many challenges especially on social and learning facilities. Teachers have also never been enough in all schools that I have attended including this one. In primary school, I

think teachers are unable to attend to the need of special children because of the work pressure and the high ratio of learners to teachers”. Anita also noted that support from the government is available especially in her current secondary school. At the primary level, the level of government support was minimal.

In summary, Anita’s experience illustrates the lack of proper support for learners living with a disability by the education system. Failure by education authorities to detect and address problems facing children living with disabilities in terms of access to education is also evident. Lack of support from the community, negative cultural beliefs about a disability, lack of awareness, inadequate facilities and specially-trained teachers in schools, and unfavourable curricula were also evident in Anita’s experience. Schools are also unable to make ground-level decisions on the treatment of learners living with disability.

The experiences of the three deaf learners paint a picture of how negative cultural beliefs and perceptions about people living with a disability greatly affect the lives of learners living with one. The stigmatization of learners living with a disability, lack of support from parents, and lack of awareness by parents are also key impediments to accessing quality education by disabled learners. The experiences also expose some teachers’ intolerance of disabled children. Teachers, especially in normal schools, lack basic training in special education and therefore they are unable to attend to the needs of learners living with a disability. The experiences also revealed the need for policy implementers to think of structuring the curricula with different types of special learners in mind and create a good platform for citizens to get information about available government support.

Table 4.3 Deaf learners' Views on a Sorted Theme

Themes/ Names	Norbert	Edward	Anita
Nature of (deafness)	Totally deaf	partially deaf	partially deaf
Type support	Interpreter	Interpreter	Interpreter
Cause disability	Premature birth	Auditory	Non-none
Parental support	Minimal	Minimal	Minimal
Society Acceptance	Not fully	Not fully	Not fully
Parent awareness of school	No	No	No
Who give most support	Teacher	Teacher	Teacher
Any other group support	Catholic	Catholic	Catholic
Govt intervention	Early	Early	late
Experience with curriculum	Unfavourable	Unfavourable	Unfavourable
Infrastructure / Facilities	Inadequate	Inadequate	Inadequate

4.2.7 Experiences of participant G: MERCY

4.2.7.1 Overview of the Participant

Participant G, whom I will refer to as Mercy, is a physically-handicapped young girl in Saint George Special School in Kisumu County. Mercy stated the following about her background, and particularly her early life: "I was not born crippled. I got sick at a tender age and developed a boil which was not properly attended to. My parents took me to hospital when they realized that the condition was getting worse. However, it was too late. My leg had to be amputated which meant that I could no longer walk normally. This was a very sad moment for me. My parent's ignorance caused my disability by I have learnt to live with it".

4.2.7.2 Experiences during Childhood

Mercy's childhood experience was good until her leg was amputated, and she discussed how she was treated by others in the following: "Disability is not good; I was only loved and visited by other children when I had both legs to play and run around with them. When I lost my leg, my friends no longer wanted to associate with me. The friendship and love diminished. I felt isolated most of the time, I was lonely in my wheelchair. I had to depend on other people to help me move to places I wanted to go.

Clearly, my freedom was curtailed. People looked at me with sympathy and helplessness. Going to toilet or taking birth was always difficult because I had to ask for assistance which took away my much-needed privacy. In addition, using the wheelchair brought a lot of complication into my life; I needed a spacious path to move, and larger doors to get into a room. Due to my inability to walk, I had to be left out of many places because moving around with me was cumbersome. The community isolated me and treated me like a reject. I was a victim of abuse and discrimination by the society. However, my parents later bought a prosthetic leg for me which greatly improved my situation. I gained some of my dignity back and felt freer”.

4.2.7.3 Learning Environment and School Life

My conversation with Mercy then focussed on her school life: “I could not attend school at the right time. I delayed due to the circumstances surrounding my disability. My parents took me to a regular school near our home in order to monitor my leg and to attend to me fully. They feared that the other leg could also be infected. The Head teacher of that school and the teachers were against my admission to the school citing lack of facilities, skill and manpower to take care of me. My father had to request the area education officer to intervene and that is how I managed to get my primary education. The facilities within the school were not favourable; there were no proper paths for my wheel chair. My father used to take me to the school in the morning and picked me in the evening. I had to survive within the day especially when it came to movement to and from classrooms, toilet, and the field. Sometimes, I would be left alone behind when other learners were moving from one place to another. I used to carry my lunch to avoid bothering others to take me for lunch. I was also lucky that the school administration exempted me from doing manual work such as cleaning. I was also permitted to go for games at will since I had to get my fellow learner to push my wheelchair”.

Having been admitted to the school through the instruction of the County Education Officer, Mercy received support from teachers and the school administration. She also impressed the teachers due to her outstanding academic performance. She recalled how she used to be the best in her class in mathematics. She used to spend most of her time reading because she preferred being in one place to avoid a lot of movement. She worked hard despite all the challenges she was facing. In her current school, Mercy

noted that life is much better, and the environment is conducive to her learning needs. Facilities are available, and the students are supportive of one another. In addition, the teachers are well trained to attend to their special needs. She also informed me that she is able to make her own decisions and that life in the school is enjoyable.

4.2.7.4 Curriculum, Government Participation, and Challenges

According to Mercy, the current curriculum is still not favourable to learners living with a disability. She believes that the curriculum is rigid, and the lessons are structured in a way that only favours normal learners, as can be seen in her following statements: “I can’t move fast from the assembly to class or move quickly from one class to another because the facilities are far apart. I think the curriculum and the facilities do not match. I have no problems with the subjects, but I have a problem with the facilities. I can read, write, understand all subjects and can express myself very well in both English and Kiswahili. I think my disability requires special learning facilities, adequate teaching and support staff as well as spacious rooms”.

On government support, Mercy indicated the following: “The government supported me to join primary school through the area education officer. My school fee is also paid for and the teachers are provided by the government. I think that is the participation I have seen from them”. On challenges, Mercy cited the movement between facilities that are far apart, the unfavourable design of the school infrastructure, inadequate facilities, and the shortage of teachers.

Mercy’s experiences highlight the plight of physically-handicapped learners in schools. The infrastructure design in schools does not take into account the difficulties of learners with disabilities, such as the inability to walk normally. Parental support, acceptance by the community, government intervention, and support from teachers as well as decision-making involving learners living with a disability at the school level also emerged from the discussion.

4.2.8 Experiences of Participant H: STANLEY

4.2.8.1 Overview of the Participant

Participant H, who, I nicknamed as Stanley, is a learner at Saint George Special School in Kisumu County, and he discussed his condition with me, stating the following: “I have no lower limb as you can see me seated on this wheel chair. I think I was born this way. I had no one to ask about the cause of my disability because I have

never seen my parents since birth. I was told that I was dumped on the streets. The police found me on the streets and took me to a Catholic foster home”.

4.2.8.2 Experiences during Childhood

Stanley then took me through his experiences while growing up in a foster home. He had no father or mother; the catholic home was all he had: “I had a very difficult experience while growing up. I had to rely on others for nearly everything; I had to be assisted to bath, wash my clothes, and other activities. I was helpless and depressed. At the foster home, most of the children were normal and they would make fun of me because of my condition. They did not understand what I was going through. I could not play the childhood games like the other children, so I stayed indoors most of the time. It was a lonely life. The only people I could rely on for support were the Catholic Sisters who were technically my parents. Other children would be visited by their relatives except me”.

Stanley underwent various challenges despite being in a children’s home. There was very little support from the older children that had been assigned the role of helping Stanley. He got into trouble with the other children many times because he used to report them to the Catholic Sisters whenever they engaged in activities that were not allowed in the children’s home. His humility and honesty made him get along very well with the Catholic Sisters, however, who in turn supported him to the best of their ability.

4.2.8.3 Learning Environment and School Life

Here is a narration by Stanley on his school and the friends he made there: “I learnt in a regular school next to the foster home where I lived. The place was convenient for me because of my condition. The Catholic Sisters wanted a place that was near the home so that they could easily monitor and support me. The other children in the school were also from the neighbourhood. The learning environment in the school was completely unfavourable. Moving from one place to another within the school was a big challenge because there were no facilities to aid my movement. The design of the infrastructure in the school did not consider learners living with disability like me. I relied heavily on the help of a few fellow learners who were kind enough to push my wheelchair around the school compound. These few friends that I made were really useful and made life better for me”.

Stanley's school life took a positive turn when he found some good friends who understood his situation: "I think I started enjoying learning in school after making friends. Although the school lacked environmental infrastructural facilities befitting me, other learners made me feel comfortable. My friends treated me with love and respect. I got protection from all corners though there were some abuses from a few children. The teachers were also supportive though they lacked special training on how to handle learners living with disability like me".

In Stanley's current secondary school, the learning environment is supportive of his condition, especially because it is a special school. I asked him about his experience in the current school and he indicated that his life is more comfortable than it had been: "life is comfortable for me; facilities are available even though they are not enough. The learners are friendly and supportive. I think I have been lucky because everywhere I go I am treated with a lot of empathy and love. I am happy and grateful. The learners here have different kinds of disability and we all understand and support each other. The teachers are trained to attend to our needs even though their number is inadequate".

4.2.8.4 Curriculum, Government Participation, and Challenges

About his experience with the curriculum, Stanley indicated the following: "I am a good student and there is no subject that I find difficult. I think the subjects are favourable for me especially because most of them involve reading. However, I have a challenge with the structure of the school routine. In my previous school, I often got late for assembly or for lessons because I was unable to move swiftly from one place to another. Changing class venues in between lessons was difficult because of my disability. The teachers were also not well trained to attend to the needs of special learners like me".

In Stanley's current school, the situation is much better. Teachers are well trained in special education and the environment is generally friendly. However, Stanley cited challenges to do with the curriculum structure: "In this school I have encountered problems with practical-based subjects. Laboratory lessons are challenging because of the physical activity involved. I think special labs should be designed for disabled learners like me. Agriculture is also a challenge. I cannot go the

farm like the other students because I am on a wheel chair. I hope something can be done to better accommodate students like me in such subjects”.

In terms of government intervention/support, Stanley stated the following: “I think the government has been quite supportive. I am here today because of the government and the Catholic Church. They provide me with food, accommodation and education. The only areas of improvement are infrastructure and increasing the number of specially trained teachers”.

In conclusion, Stanley’s experiences bring out some key thematic areas that are in line with the objective of this study. Lack of parental and peer support, lack of proper awareness by guardians, infrastructure-related challenges in schools, lack of adequate facilities, unfavourable curricula, and inadequate numbers of specially-trained teachers have been identified as some of the major impediments to the access to quality education by learners living with a disability like Stanley.

4.2.9 Participant I: DAVID

4.2.9.1 Overview of the Participant

Participant I, called David here, is a handicapped learner at St. George Special School in Kisumu county, and the following is some of the information that he provided about his background: “I was born healthy and started my primary school education in a neighbourhood school. I lost both of my limbs in an accident and that is how I became handicapped. I was very lucky that I did not die as my uncle perished while I recuperated in hospital for over one year. When I got discharged from hospital, I was a leg short and in a wheel chair”.

4.2.9.2 Experiences during Childhood

What follows is part of his narration on his childhood that emerged from our conversation: “My experience as a child was very interesting given that I was a lively, agile child before the accident took place. I had playmates and we had known places that we were fond of visiting together to play at. Life suddenly changed when I left my hospital bed; I was in a wheelchair and could only move when supported. This rendered me unable to play the games I used to play before the accident. I lost my friends one by one because many of them felt that I had become burdensome to them. I also realised that my parents started becoming too protective to allow people to freely visit me as before”.

David went on to discuss some of the emotional aspects of living with a disability: “The only sad and emotionally hurtful thing I noticed was a lot of sympathy from everyone everywhere I went to. I was always only seen as someone who escaped death while others looked at me as someone whose life had lost meaning. Moreover, some other people who had not known me prior to my accident only viewed me as a social reject and as a beggar. I was also abused by some people from my community who viewed disability as a social ill. Being on a wheel chair complicated my situation even more. I was looked at as the stereotypical beggar who moves around on a wheel chair. Thanks to my parents, I got the scratches that I now use to ease my mobility”.

4.2.9.3 Learning Environment and School Life

In the following passage, David provides more information about his schooling and the facilities and the prospects that the schools he attended offered: “I was rejected from the school I was in before I got the accident; the school administration told my father that they had no facilities for my disability. They stressed that they had no specially tailored toilets for me and didn’t have ramped pathways for my wheelchair and so they suggested that I should be transferred to a special school. My father was not interested in taking me to a boarding school or a special school; his interest was in seeing me learn in a school closer to him as he assesses my progress. Through the support of the area chief, I got into a school in which among conditions I was given was that I should strictly adhere to all school regulations just like other students. My father agreed to that and I started learning in my new school within a week”.

David continues in this passage to discuss his schooling and both the good and bad aspects: “I had to be supported by my parents every morning in order to get to school in time. I feared the head teacher and tried by best not to offend him; but it was not always easy. The school regulations were very tough given my condition; attending the morning assembly, wheeling down to the classrooms in a rush while others were running, and the pathways were not large enough for me to access all buildings. It was very difficult for me, but I managed to sail through the difficulties. After going to this school for four years, things normalized a little for me. I got used to my classmates and teachers. I was even exempted from doing other things like manual chores as per the school routine. I managed to develop very good rapport with my class teachers and my class prefect so that they would be a little more understanding and empathetic whenever

I needed them to be. Despite all these good that happened to me while in this school, there were bad boys who were always outside the school gate waiting to scare me, abuse or beat me up as I waited to be picked and taken home after school”.

In the following passage, David draws some conclusions, with a final caveat about his past experience: “My parents were against me joining this school because it was very far from home. However, it has proved to be more comfortable and with consideration to my disability. Disabled students here are accorded respect and care and since all of us have some form of disability, we always find ways to support one another. I even noticed that some students have more serious handicaps than mine. We all consider ourselves family and we empathise with what each one of us is undergoing. I am very comfortable with the facilities here; I can walk anywhere want to, the classrooms are great, and their structural design has good consideration for different types of handicaps. The only problem we have is that teachers do not stay long enough in school to give us the kind of support we may need from them while they are gone. The school also offers religious nourishment which gives me hope for a better life in future”.

4.2.9.4 Curriculum, Government Participation, and Challenges

David had numerous things to say about the curriculum in the schools that he attended, as can be seen in the following: “I was taken care of by the teachers and I never got a lot of difficulties with the curriculum. However, there were areas in which the curriculum was not friendly to me. I would attribute these difficulties I faced with the curriculum to the kind of facilities that were available, or not, to me. I was unable to move fast enough to cope with the school routine while I was in primary school. I was hard pressed during the break times; fifteen (15) minutes was never enough for me to go to the toilet and back to class in time. I never had problems with the classwork as I was able to do all subjects effectively. My handicap did not affect my intelligence. I can think, read and write like any other student. My primary problem is mobility and comfort in class. Sometimes I miss classes but that is normal. Some teachers were not very friendly to me while in primary school and that affected my performance, especially in those teachers’ subjects. I think this curriculum needs to put more consideration for disabled students”.

For David, many problems persist: “I still find problems with the curriculum while in this secondary school, especially in subjects that require some form of rigorous activities like standing and digging such as in the agricultural subjects. I also find others requiring a lot of movement and bending yet I cannot bend or move a lot as I do not have any supportive staff here to help me. To make things worse, since most of the teachers here are not permanently employed by the government, they come and leave a lot; most of the time without ever finishing the stipulated course work. We therefore never get to complete most of our school syllabus”.

In terms of government support, David offered the following information: “On government support, I think the government has done very little for me. The government only supports the extremely poor students. I was taken care of by my parents and they have toiled to provide all my personal needs. Apart from providing good teachers, who are not even enough, the government only supports me by letting me stay in school without paying fees. I think the government has not come up with better ways of supporting all disabled people; they are only interested in the few ones with very serious problems and whose parents are extremely poor”.

David’s experiences indicate how being disabled (handicapped) can befall anybody and at any time. The causes of disability should not be associated with societal beliefs. His experiences also show the need for all primary schools to have facilities for any disabled child provided he or she reports for admission. Finally, networking was noted in this study as important, as it was through the area chief that David was allowed into the second school and accorded respect and consideration despite it having no facilities befitting him.

In conclusion, the experiences of the three handicapped students point out that one can be disabled for several reasons. The experiences further indicated the role of parents and explain why parents normally react positively to support their children. The experiences also tell of some unfortunate cases in the society and without government policies, such instances could end up in loss of life. They also suggest the need for adequate facilities to enable handicapped students to access education, which is a basic human right. Government-provided curricula were also identified as not as considerate of the needs of handicapped students as they should be. More teachers should also be employed in special schools.

Table 4.4 handicap learners' views on a sorted theme

Themes/ Names	Mercy	Stanley	David
Nature of (handicap)	Has one leg	No lower limbs	No legs
Type support	Prosthetic leg	Wheel chair	Scratches
Cause disability	Boil developed	Born premature	Accident
Parental support	Full	Non	Full
Parent awareness of school	Yes	No	Yes
Society Acceptance	Sympathy	Sympathy	Sympathy
Who give most support	Teacher	Teacher	Teacher
Any other group support	Catholic	Catholic	Catholic
Govt intervention	Late	Early	Late
Experience with curriculum	fair	fair	fair
Infrastructure / Facilities	Inadequate	Inadequate	Inadequate

4.3 Second Group of Participants: Parents with Disabled Children in Secondary Schools

4.3.1 Participant J: Roko

4.3.1.1 Overview of the Participant

Participant J, named Roko, was a parent at St. George's School for the handicapped. To begin our discussion, I asked Roko to give an overview of himself: "I am a parent in this school and also serve as a Parent Teachers Association member (PTA). I am a university graduate and currently working in a private sector as a senior accountant".

4.3.1.2 Experiences with His Child

I then engaged Roko regarding the experiences with his child in order to understand the cause of his child's disability, the challenges faced, and whether he received any support: "I got to learn about my daughter's problem early enough, but I did not take it seriously. I can recall assigning her health problems to my wife as I was busy with my career. A small boil which emerged first which did not seem very painful as I could tell from observing my daughter. The boil continued to develop, albeit very

slowly, given that her mother and I would take her to the dispensary every so often to get some pain killers. In a duration of about one and a half years, things went out of hand. The boil had grown into a sore wound. It was this time that I got serious and took her for a proper check-up. The result was devastating; my daughter's bones had been severely affected and the only way out was I amputating her leg. I was told the disease was infectious and would quickly spread into other parts of the body if the leg was not amputated as soon as possible. I had no option but to comply with the doctors' professional advice".

Roko continued to narrate the difficult moment when the doctors informed him that his daughter's leg would have to be amputated: "We had to sacrifice a lot during this time. I used most of my finances to see to it that my daughter was well as my wife spent all her time at the hospital with our little girl. It was a very difficult time as I could not get any sort of assistance from anywhere. After it was ascertained that my daughter's leg was going to be I amputated, I started thinking of what to do next. My wife and I then went for counselling where we were told to do our best to make sure that our daughter is as comfortable as possible. We were also advised to accept living with her in her new situation with the given additional demands. I remember the first thing I did to my daughter was buying her a wheel chair and very many toys. I was advised told to give her good diet which I maintained. Later on, I bought her prosthetic legs. I did my best to follow doctors' instructions about how to care for her but above all I had to make her feel happy all the time the best way I could. I felt guilty and remorseful for giving more time and attention to my career more than I did to my daughter's health. When I realised that she was at her school-going age, I had to figure out how to prepare her and which school to take her to. I then settled on a regular day school next to my home so that I could easily take care of her. I therefore started buying some pictorial reading materials and a tutor was hired for her preparation".

Clearly, Roko was a very supportive parent. He sacrificed everything to support his daughter and showed her a lot of love when she needed it most. Roko used his resources to ensure that his daughter, whose leg had now been amputated, was comfortable and happy. This highlights the importance of parental support for children living with a disability.

4.3.1.3 School and Community Life

Roko continued to offer utmost support for his daughter even when the time came for her to start schooling, as he stated in the following: “It was saddening that my daughter was getting older and I had not yet gotten a good school for her. I needed a school in which I could easily monitor her. I went to a nearby school seeking a spot for my daughter, but I was unfortunately turned away with the school administration citing lack of facilities for my daughter. The head teacher even suggested that I should consider taking her to a special school where the school routine would have been flexible for my daughter. I however ignored him and went to the education office where I was given a letter to take to him stating that my daughter be admitted without any condition. My daughter was then accepted in the school as I hoped for. Life was still not easy given that I had to take her to school every morning and go for her in the evening”.

He continued to discuss her schooling and his connection with it in the following passage: “In this school that she goes to, I find things easy for me since I only go to school to her aid when called by the teachers, or when there is a parents’ meeting like the one I had today. I find school routine here very accommodative for my daughter and manageable to me as well. Because this school is only meant for students of her nature, I am always at peace. I give deaf ears to what people from my society say about me since they are not very friendly to me and my family. I do not believe in some of their views of seeing a witchdoctor to tell me what might have caused disability in my house. Some have told me to marry another wife so that I can get rid of that omen. I am happy that most children treat my daughter with a lot of empathy”.

4.3.1.4 Support Acquired and Government Intervention

I also asked Roko whether he had received any government support in taking care of or educating his daughter and he responded in the following: “It is only possible to get support if you have information. A society in which meetings are arranged without consideration to other people’s program tend to reduce chances of many attending the important meetings. This usually curtail getting constructive contribution and ideas of any form of support. I did not get any support from any quarter since I been able to attend most of the meetings. Moreover, my community members did not support me but only tried to mislead me. They have no respect for disability and are always

judgmental. I hated this”. Here, Roko blames the society around him for not giving him information on existing support systems for his daughter.

Although Roko’s daughter was not able to access government support initially, he noted that the support came later and has been helpful: “The government was so authoritative on my daughter getting into a school system. When the school’s head teacher totally refused, I used education office who intervened, and I got the chance I wished for. I have never paid any money for school fees; the government has been doing that, both in primary and secondary school. Although I am supposed to be making some contribution to support school projects like new buildings and for the PTA kitty, most parents are never interested in supporting this or even in attending to their children needs. The government and the Catholic church have instead supported this school’s projects”.

In conclusion, Roko’s experiences indicated the need to care of children’s health to avoid future complications. They also highlighted the importance of being knowledgeable of the community and its general environment. This experience can be used by policymakers and implementers to involve everybody in decision-making for rapid results.

4.3.2 Participant K: Selly

4.3.2.1 Overview of the Participant

Participant K, referred to as Selly, was a female parent at the Nico Hauser School for the Blind, and in the following, she talks a little about her background: “I am 48 years old and I can’t speak English; only Kiswahili and Kikuyu. I never attended any formal education. I was born blind. I think my blindness was hereditary given that my mother was blind. All my four children are also blind. I was married but my husband left and abandoned us after our last born, never to see him again. He kept hoping I would give birth to a child with no visual problems but when he noticed the trend was the same, he left”.

4.3.2.2 Experiences with Her Child

On her experiences with her blind child, Selly stated the following: “When I gave birth and noticed my child was blind, I did not bother much about going to hospital or seeking medical consultation since she was my third blind child. However, I was

lucky my child did not have any health complications of any sort at the time. I remember only taking her for the usual vaccinations meant for all newly born babies. My child learnt most things through instinct. I recall her noticing most sounds of different people, birds, animals etc. Her ears were sharp, and she had a really good memory enabling her to remember and retain a lot of information, even after a long time”.

Indeed, Selly was very determined to support her blind child despite the fact she was also blind. She recalls how her daughter was very intelligent and likeable in the following narration: “I remember anytime I was walking with her looking for food, her instincts helped her make very fast judgments about where had already been in the previous days. Her sharp instincts always made me happy. As young as she was, my daughter could detect when people were welcoming to us or not. At times when the reception was poor she felt sympathetic to me. I also remember that at such a tender age she was a good listener and could follow a good storyline. I would call her my diary and I preferred moving around with her instead of my other children. She was also very noisy and quite engaging, and most people liked talking to her”.

4.3.2.3 School and Community Life

Despite the fact that Selly was aware of the existence of special schools for her daughter, the information she had was not sufficient, and therefore she went ahead and took her blind daughter to a regular school, and in the following she describes a problem that she initially encountered: “I had a problem for the first time when my daughter went to school. Although some of my children were already in special schools, I had never known the exact documents they used to join those schools. I took my daughter to start learning in a regular school and at the time, it was not easy to get food. It was a hunger period. Life was very difficult while we were only two in the house as my other children were in boarding schools. I needed a place for my daughter to get food and only to come after lunch time or in the evening. My daughter, by then, had not even reached school-going age but I only took her to school just, so she could benefit from the free school feeding program. I took with her no documents despite demands from the head teacher”.

Having taken her daughter to a regular school, which had no special facilities to support her, Selly recalled that her daughter experienced numerous challenges, as can be seen in the following statements: “My daughter suffered a lot of humiliation in this

school. She would be bullied, abused and told all sorts of nasty things. I asked her to just endure and persevere for a just for a little while but it even got to a point where she would get beaten by some school workers. Nobody in the school bothered about her despite her age and delicate condition. I had no choice but to take her to another regular school. She had then reached school-going age but unfortunately there was not much improvement here either. The mistreatment was the same and with her new teachers even openly showing hatred and disregard for my daughter. It was by good luck that I got her some support through influential people in the community to join a special school. She tells me how she like it in her new school and feels she has all that she need to get a good job and take her out of poverty”. On attending meetings Selly notes that; “In all these schools including this one here, I never attend parent meetings because people have a negative attitude towards me, others about my daughter. The government and the Catholic Church provide everything here so why should I come and give money or assist in building as a PTA member? I can only come to visit my daughter and find out about her health status”.

Selly also lamented about the negative perception by the community concerning people living with a disability, as stated in the following: “The society here is fond of profiling people and usually, I am profiled in bad light. People have a bad mind set about me and my children. Since I am poor, the community gives support with a lot of strings attached and sometimes alongside nasty abuses. I feel less of a human being most of the time, having to beg daily from one corner of the community to another just so my children can have an education”.

4.3.2.4 Support Acquired and Government Intervention

I also wanted to understand the kind of support system that Selly and children that are blind are able to access, and she supplied information in this regard as follows: “I am very lucky to have gotten a lot of support over the years; I get food from the community, whenever I have no work. My children have been raised through the good will of the society. I think speaking out your troubles is good. It is from doing so that I managed to get sponsorship for my daughter’s education from people I don’t even know, some that I have never even met. Some of these good people would even go to the Ministry of Education and ministry of children on their own volition to seek financial support for my children on my behalf”.

Selly continued to explain how various groups, including the government, the Catholic Church, and well-wishers have supported her and her daughter: “There are many instances that I think helped me acquire education for my children. Moving from one house to another looking for small jobs helped me know exactly what was happening in my society. I was always aware of all the planned meetings in my village. I was able to get to know important people in the society and their impact in many issues. On the outlook, it may have seemed like all I did was to beg, but, I was also majorly gathering the information I needed to help get my children into special schools. I have gained a lot from the government through my children. I have also been able to get most of educational support such as bursaries and some other gifts from politicians. Education and children officers have been very supportive to me and in her school, my daughter is loved by all teachers because of her exemplary performance. In most cases she gets some personal support from the Catholic church sisters and teachers”.

These parents’ experiences demonstrate the importance of networking, and they also reveal how very few people determine the implementation of policies. What also comes out is that despite the majority of members of the society’s disregard of the disabled, there are still many good-hearted people that are willing to help support them to live more comfortably than they otherwise would be able to.

4.3.3 Participant L: Lidbro

4.3.3.1 Overview of the Participant

Participant K, named Lidbro, is a parent at the Father Auderaa School for the Deaf. To describe herself, she stated the following: “I am currently 36 years old. I completed my fourth form and before joining university, I gave birth out of wedlock to my first-born child, who is a learner here at Father Auderaa School for the Deaf. I sell vegetables in one of the small centres within Bondo sub-county”.

4.3.3.2 Experiences with Her Child

Lidbro had a very difficult experience when she gave birth to her son. She was still young and living with her parents: “My experience with my son was so disrupted given that when I gave birth, I was still a young woman and so I never wanted my father to know about it. I was taken to my grandmother’s home by my mother to deliver my baby there. Sadly, my child turned out deaf and I was devastated and did not know what

to do. I feared my father and felt ashamed and embarrassed before the society, having given birth out of wedlock and to a deaf child. I felt suicidal and never had the thoughts or desire to join university. One night when my grandmother was sound asleep, I decided to run away, leaving my child behind. The next morning my grandmother could not find me. My mother was called, and both tried looking for me to no avail. I was even reported dead to the police; they then came and took my child to a children's home and started investigating my whereabouts".

In the following passage, she continues to narrate the events in this difficult time in her past, including incarceration: "I had gone into hiding in a friend's house where I could not eat, sleep, or think constructively. I was stressed, depressed and very worried, especially about my child. However, in about two weeks of hiding, the police found out my hide-out and arrested me. I was arraigned in court after the investigation was complete and my parents and grandmother were called to testify in my trial. I was sentenced to three years in jail. I had no contact with my child during my entire stay in jail. Guilt consumed me. All I knew was that my child was in a foster home and he was doing well, given the circumstances. After my jail term, I found my boy doing well but I had nowhere to take him since I had no job or house and I was very poor. I left him at his foster home but continued to visit him. I later started a vegetable selling business but I still I could not afford to have my son live with me because I was unable to fend for his school fees. He has been living at the foster home until now".

4.3.3.3 School and Community Life

My conversation with Lidbro then focussed on her child's school life. She did not participate much in her son's upbringing because she had run away, and her child was taken to a foster home. However, she still tried to support him as much as she could, as can be seen in the following statements: "I know very little about my son's school life; he has lived in a foster home all his life and it is the government that sponsored his education. He tells me that he gets some assistance from the Catholic Church beside the government support. I also support him whenever I can afford to. I am happy that the foster home knew of my police case and the jail term I served as I am taken as a parent not an imposter. Sometimes, however, I find it very difficult to come to school during a parents' meeting since the society has very little regard for a disabled child's parent. Coming to a parents' meeting with all parents in attendance usually feels like

too much exposure and judgment since all parents' eyes are on me and other disabled children's parents. I really love my child he also loves me too but the humiliation I go through is too much that sometimes I have to literally hide my face from other parents. I have two more children, but I don't have a stable husband and no other man is willing to take me as his wife since they always think my lineage is cursed with disability". Again, cultural beliefs and perceptions about people living with a disability are manifested here. No man wanted to marry Lidbro because of what the society believed about her.

4.3.3.4 Support Acquired and Government Intervention

On government intervention and support from other groups, Lidbro had the following to say: "I have never begged for support all my life. I just work as hard as I can but the society just deems me a lowlife. Some people even say I attempted to murder my child. My child's education has been possible through government intervention. The government saw the need to model my son just like other children. They have been doing everything possible to enable his education; he has good teachers, interpreters and facilities. He is loved where he lives and sometimes assigned to help other new children in the home since he has lived there for quite a long time. The Catholic Church has been so helpful to my son. He tells me that most of his hearing aids are constantly replaced by the Catholic Church Father-in-charge".

In summary, Lidbro's experiences reflect the government's devotion to policy implementation and especially in caring for disabled children's education and their general well-being. It also teaches us not to be afraid of society's opinions to the extent of causing harm to others. All human beings are the same in many aspects, including those that the society considers as "misfits" and whose participation in society can improve if they are better cared for.

From the three parents' experiences, it came out clearly that society has not positively welcomed disabled people. Stigmatization is real and policy implementers in this field need to expedite the implementation of policies meant to address stigmatization and discrimination. The experiences of Roko and Selly demonstrate how awareness meetings are not all inclusive; very few people are usually invited to public meetings, and most people being left in the dark. The experiences also revealed the government's serious role in supporting disabled students. It was clear from the

discussions that government support is not biased, especially against disabled students in secondary schools, and the discussions also revealed that teachers need to make a lot of inclusive decisions regarding the running of schools, more so when it comes to disabled children's well-being.

Table 4.5 parent of learners living with disability on a sorted theme

Themes/ Names	Roko	Selly	Lidbro
Education background	Degree	Non	4th form
When learnt of child disability	Small walking	At birth	At birth
Societal view of the child	Mix	Beggar	Mix
Awareness meeting participation	Non	Yes	Non
Awareness of special school	Yes	No	No
Contact with Policy implementer	Yes	Yes	Yes
School participation	Yes	No	No
Support from govt (individual)	Non	Yes	Yes
Support from govt (group)	Yes	Yes	Yes
Any other group support	Catholic church	Many	Not sure

4.4 Third Group of Participants: Special School Principals

The third group of participants were the heads of special schools. I was interested in understanding their experiences with learners living with a disability, their role in decision-making in the school, and the challenges that they are facing.

4.4.1 Participant M: Richard

4.4.1.1 Participant Overview

Participant M, referred to as Richard, is a principal at the Fr. Auderaa School for the Deaf. To introduce himself, Richard stated the following: "I am in my late forties, married with five children. I hold a master's degree in Special Education and I have attended many seminars related to special-needs children. I am very experienced in the teaching profession having worked as a permanent government teacher for the last twenty-three years".

4.4.1.2 School Management Procedure

I asked Richard about the school management procedure in order to understand his role in policy implementation: “Heading a special school for the deaf is not an easy task. I am expected to do a lot by the society and more especially by the government. The community expects me to understand the needs of all deaf children without realising that some have many disabilities in one while others have more complications and needs than I was trained for. However, the main duty I have as a principal is mostly determined by the Ministry of Education. I am entrusted to admit students to this school; this is usually done from a central pool decided by the Ministry of Education immediately after standard eight examination results are out. Admission is usually strict and thoroughly monitored with members from the Ministry of Education supervising all the steps. Since not all students selected usually report to my school, it is usually my responsibility to give reports to the ministry in due time so that they can get appropriate replacement or advise me. Apart from admissions, other responsibilities I have are well structured and are procedurally administrative. I make sure all teachers are working well and providing evidence of their input through schemes of work, lesson plans and continuous assessment tests to students. I frequently move around the school compound and classes to monitor students’ activities and teachers’ involvement as per the school time table and daily routine. To help teachers become efficient I make sure they have their teaching needs. To ascertain that I am in line with prescribed practices as a principal, I usually work with the Ministry of Education a lot to get their advice and request for any support. During the national examination period, life is never easy for me. I do make sure all examination papers reach school in time and returned to the strong room under police supervision immediately the examination is over. In co-curriculum studies, I try to assist my students in getting the playing equipment befitting them and make sure I get them to participate in games as planned by the ministry”.

On the challenges faced in the execution of the mandate that he described above, Richard indicated the following: “My work is fully procedural, and most activities are scheduled and open. It is not easy to work alone as a principal without teachers as my effectiveness depend on availability of teachers, funds and equipment. I lack most of these necessities in this school, but I make do with the little I have since the school must operate, regardless”.

4.4.1.3 Parents and Community Participation in School Management

I was also interested in understanding the level of participation by parents and the community in the affairs of the school. It was evident that parents and community involvement/participation is minimal, as suggested by Richard in the following: “I have over eighty children in this school. This means that I should be counting on over sixty parents or guardians. It is bewildering that parents whose children study here are never interested in supporting the school in any way. Their participation in school projects can never be relied upon. In most cases, I organise termly meetings with the parents per class but only a few of them usually come. We have a Parent-Teacher Association, (PTA), a body created under the Education Act, which this is never active since parents do not attend meetings. It is even worse only a handful of parents actually attend the school’s Annual General Meetings in which we give prizes and presents to both hardworking teachers and students. Parents are supposed to be part of school management but in this school, I manage it only with my teachers. Many parents decline invitation calls to discuss their children’s acts of indiscipline. I think government regulation is to blame for the parents’ poor participation; I am not allowed to send a child home in cases of indiscipline, especially the disabled ones. It is my sole duty to find means of solving such problems when they arise. I am given the mandate to make the decisions for the betterment of this school, but paradoxically, without any powers to actually implement them”.

Richard in the following passage from our discussion continued to talk about community involvement: “I have tried to involve the community in running of this school but it is never successful. I give them opportunity to supply food items and employ some them as manual workers but the notion outside is that the school belongs to government and they should keep off. Many of the times that I have the problem of a student sneaking out of the school compound they keep quiet when asked to help trace them. Some even help the students in hiding them from the school authority. The government expects that I work with community, it is never as easy as expected. I am comfortable with the idea of a sponsor because it makes everything easy, for example, by using the church to mobilise the community whenever things are not working well”.

4.4.1.4 Government Role in the Running of the School

Richard noted that the government has been instrumental in the running of the school. He also identified the Catholic Church as an important support group for the school, as can be seen in the following ideas of his: “The government’s involvement has been very beneficial to me as a principal given that everything is well set out for me in a structured way, making my duty to execute only. I have a team of teachers who are employed by the government. These teachers teach students on behalf of the government while following a curriculum also developed by the government. It is this curriculum that assists me to assign teachers’ lessons and direct them on what to teach at a certain level. I am completely dependent on this document in assisting me to monitor both my teachers and students”.

Richard further discussed the role of the parents in the following: “Parents in this school are never cooperative in assisting me to fund the required development projects. The government has taken it upon itself to provide me with necessary funds to construct classrooms and buy infrastructural facilities that I request for. The government has also made it easy for me to manage my teachers; I am always sent quality assurances officers to assess the school curriculum and other school developments. This makes the school running very easy since each one must adhere to government regulations. The Catholic Church that helps me alongside the government in teachers and infrastructural facilities provision”.

The topic then turned to the issue of examinations and their relationship with the government: “On issues to do with exams, I think the government has made it easy for me to only teach and then make its own assessment as per the curriculum by setting and marking its own examinations to students after staying in school for four years. My students are just taught and after four years of studying, a summative examination is done. This examination’s results determine whether the student qualifies to join university or be admitted in medium colleges”.

In conclusion, Richard’s experiences show how principals are entrusted with a lot of work in terms of government policy implementation in a structural manner. There is also a dire need for parents and the community to be made aware of their roles. The government seems to monopolise school management. It is also evident that parental

and community involvement is lacking. Lack of adequate facilities and teachers also emerged as key challenges.

4.4.2 Participant N: Horrins

4.4.2.1 Participant Overview

Participant N, whom I named Horrins, was the principal of Saint George Special School, and he stated the following concerning himself and some of his background: “I am in my late thirties. My initial training was to teach in primary school, but I furthered my studies by going to university for a degree in Special Education. Currently, I am taking master’s degree in Special Education. I have worked as a trained teacher in many schools from special primary schools, secondary schools and now as a principal. I have taught nearly all types disabilities in different special schools”.

4.4.2.2 School Management Procedure

Horrins is passionate about his career in special education and about his job, which puts him in a position to support learners living with disability. On the school management procedure and his role in policy implementation, he indicated the following: “As a school manager, my work is well programmed. I work using a curriculum and a structure which is developed from up in the Ministry of Education. I mobilize my teachers every start of the term for a meeting to distribute subjects among themselves based on each teacher’s area of specialty. We then develop the school master overall timetable to show the distribution teaching time and class. This time table is kept in my office and a copy in the staff room. It is from this timetable that each class makes its own befitting timetable to control them. I can say that what assists me to manage teachers and student is this timetable because it reflects what the curriculum wants”.

On the involvement of teachers in management, he had the following to say: “I also involve teachers in my management as a principal, as per the regulation by the ministry. My deputy assists me in all matters concerning discipline and supervision of the curriculum. I then assign each teacher one or two weeks the master-on-duty role within the school term. It is through the master-on-duty that students are well managed and visitors are well attended to. The role master-on-duty makes my work very procedural; they are approached first in administrative issues, then the master-on-duty can decide to take the matter to deputy if (s) he cannot handle it and the deputy may

hand over the matter to me if (s) he cannot handle it either. Other procedures for management is class teachers who I get to appoint for each class and heads of departments who are appointed by the Teachers' Service Commission (TSC), (TSC), in order to assist me in curriculum management”.

Further, he also indicated that the students have a role to play in connection with management, as can be seen in the following: “I have student management forums where students are given opportunity to manage themselves by their own representatives called prefects. Each class, dormitory, dining hall, library and even clubs has its own prefect. I find using that ministry structure helps me a lot since the bulk of work entrusted to me is well decentralised to other people”.

4.4.2.3 Parents and Community Participation in School Management

On parental and community participation in the running of the affairs of the school, Horrins was also quick to note that the participation of these two groups was lacking, as he indicated in the following: “I find it difficult to involve parents in running school affairs. They are hardly ever present and for those who come, their contributions are usually minimal due to lack of knowledge of our school system. Their contributions are mostly out of school regulation context and some talk of changes which can work as per structures in places and that cannot be changed by a parents' meeting. I usually have class parents' meetings scheduled termly. Although many parents strive to attend these meetings, their interests are usually centred on their children's health. Some find it hard to contribute in improving the curriculum. I have also noticed that my school parents are good in attending meetings but when asked to come up with a school project, they merely agree to it for the sake of it but no actions follow through later on, even if I try to follow up through the PTA chairman”.

I asked Horrins for his opinion on why parental participation is minimal and he stated as follows: “There is a general feeling within the quarters of my school's parents that they are poor and their children need a lot for their personal support from them. Others feel that the government gives a lot of money to this school and so they do not see the need to contribute any more money for any project”.

On community involvement, Horrins had this to say: “Apart from parents, who are also members of the community, I find it equally difficult to involve the neighbourhood community because of the way they perceive disabled students. Some

feel bad working in my school, simply because it is for the handicapped. Others fear that anything that the government is involved in is risky as it can take someone to jail. I also have a Board of Management (BOM) which is very supportive; I mostly make my requests to the community through them. The BOM, also being a ministry organ, has been very active in supporting me make requests for funding and managing the funding when granted by the government”.

4.4.2.4 Government Role in the Running of the School

On the government’s role, Horrins stated that “[a] school is part and parcel of the government. In my school I can say that the government’s role starts right from registrations. It is the government through the Ministry of Education that all schools get registered. I find this to be one of the major roles the government does. Moreover, in this school just like in any other, the government has a well-established framework of how the school is managed. That is, management through a well-developed curriculum that is monitored by education ministry officers who visit my school often. I am also provided with several management tools by the government like teachers, finances and equipment. Students are also provided by the government each year through pool selection. End of four-year examinations are also provided by the government as a control measure for me so that it can be used to judge my work in relation to the curriculum and procedures stipulated”.

Horrin’s experience reveals how all schools have a well-organised procedure developed and managed by the government. The principals and teachers are implementers of the policies and decisions made at the top by government, while the teachers and school heads make minimal decisions regarding the running of the schools. They simply follow the laid-down procedures.

4.4.3 Participant O: Jacinta

4.4.3.1 Participant Overview

Participant O, Jacinta, is the principal of Nico Hauser Special Secondary School. She introduced herself by saying the following: “I am a Catholic Church Sister. My first devotion is to God and then to His people. I studied in university here in Kenya and I have made some visits abroad for exchange programs on Special Education. Apart from that, I have been participating in seminars and workshops on how to better special

children and other vulnerable members in the society. I am an employee of the government and have served in many schools, both as a teacher and a principal”.

4.4.3.2 School Management Procedure

On the school management procedure and her role in policy implementation, Jacinta stated that “[e]verything is done completely on a routine basis in my school. All activities are documented. I find that cooperation from all stakeholders, procedurally, is what the implementation of school regulations requires. I depend on my deputy and teachers for the smooth running of the school’s daily routine. Being a Catholic Church sister, my daily duty starts at the convent with a prayer. Thereafter, I go straight to the school compound to oversee students’ morning private studies and also to ask for reports of any irregularities from watchmen and janitors. In a way, my work is quite organised and very predictive. The Ministry of Education determines how the school routine is run and it is usually difficult to go against it as all schools’ ways of management are designed centrally for easy of management by the government. I find school management in my case to be all about involving structures in place by primarily using teachers, parents and the ministry to do their rightful mandates in order to make students comfortable. It is even fortunate that teaching procedures are provided and the curriculum to follow is stipulated and all templates provided by the government”.

4.4.3.3 Parents and Community Participation in School Management

Jacinta concurs with the other school principals that I interviewed. She noted that the participation of parents and the community is minimal: “I find parents’ roles in this school well established. However, that is never the case as parents only visit the school when invited due to because of disciplinary cases, poor performances or financial related issues. They hardly ever visit to make any positive contribution for the teachers or the ministry. I try to follow the government stipulated procedures to make parents participate more actively through Parent-Teacher Association. However, we have very many challenges since many students’ parents are not their real parents but their foster parents and as such, tend to show less concern on school management, or in giving constructive contribution for improvements. Some parents do not fancy coming to school because they dislike their children’s situations. These circumstances make Parent-Teacher Association weak and hence, jeopardise my intention to fully involve parents in policy implementation. I also find the neighbourhood community very distant

and unresponsive to the school's plea for support. Sometimes the community members do not help direct my blind students when they miss the directions and go outside the school compound. Other members of the community even attempt to convince my students to drop out of school so that they could be employed as home maids or farm boys. The only substantial support I have is from my BOM".

4.4.3.4 Government Role in the Running of Schools

I also sought Jacinta's views on the role that the government plays in the running of her school and how that influences her work. Jacinta had this to say: "Concerning the government's role in school management, I think it does everything since I am here working for the government and everything is done through me. The rules and regulations that this school follow is all from the government. Teachers, who are custodians of the school properties, are directed by the government through policies, regulations and circulars. The government decides where I am posted or transferred and can indict me if it feels I am not following procedures properly. I also find the government's role in school management to involve supply of students to schools, pay their fees and decide through examination whether they pass or fail. To make students comfortable, I find that the government provides my school with building funds and finances for equipment that students need to facilitate their education. Finally, the government uses their ministry officials to monitor and advise on curriculum implementations and good management practices".

In conclusion, Jacinta's experiences reveal how the principal's activities in schools are determined by government policies. She has very little power to change the school curriculum or to design structures to suit her environment. It also came out clearly that parents and the community have no big role to play in management since they have no power to make changes in the implementation format.

The lived experiences of the three principals show that their roles as implementers have to be in tandem with the strict rules and regulations controlled by government policy through the Ministry of Education. Their experiences also reveal that although parents and the community are supposed to be part of implementation, they are never active because of many factors, such as social factors. It also came out that principals have no power to adjust or improve school operational procedures or structures even if there is a need to. Teachers are singled out as very important and

assist principals a lot in the school decision-making.

Table 4.6 Special Schools' Principals Views on a Sorted Theme

Themes/Names	Richard	Horrins	Jacinta
Education background	Master	Degree	Degree
Role in School	Implementer	Implementer	Implementer
Decision making	Formal	Formal	formal
Parents role	Less active	Moderate	Less active
Teachers role	Formal	formal	Formal
Society participation	Minimal	Minimal	Minimal
Government role	Very active	Very active	Very active
Infrastructure / facilities	Not enough	Not enough	Not enough
Serious stakeholder	Church	Church	Church
Nature of output/outcome	Prescriptive	Prescriptive	Prescriptive
Structure of management	Formal	Formal	Formal
Process of management	Administrative	Administrative	Administrative

4.5 Fourth Group of Participants: Education Officers

I also sought the views of education officers since they play a very important role as a link between the policy formulators (government) and implementers (school heads and teachers).

4.5.1 Participant P: Mr Otunga

4.5.1.1 Participant Overview

Participant P, referred to as Mr. Otunga, is an education officer in Siaya County. To introduce himself, Mr. Otunga stated the following: “My profession is teaching. I trained as a primary school teacher, then did a diploma. I later went to the University for a bachelor’s degree and now I hold a master’s degree. All my training has been in Special Education and as such, I have enough knowledge on Special Education matters. Apart from that, I taught in many special schools, both primary and secondary before joining ministry”.

4.5.1.2 Role as an Implementer

I asked Mr. Otunga to describe his role as a policy implementer: “My role as an implementer is not easy since the ministry relies on me to smoothen the routine and regulations in schools. I usually promote inclusive learning in schools and make sure that learning in all special schools is up standard. I also do some staff development by training teachers on new ideas as per government requirements, supervise curriculum, monitor and advise schools on sports, games and music and use of physical facilities and identify educational and teachers needs for improvement”.

He continued to explain how his work is well structured and follows stipulated guidelines. He only advises the ministry but makes no decisions: “While doing this work, I am always very particular on the curriculum and government regulations. Most of my work is structured and I must give a report on all my activities and findings to my bosses at the ministry headquarters monthly. Usually key in my duty as an implementer are teachers’ activities both inside the classroom and outside, seeing how students are attended to and witnessing how facilities are utilized. This is never easy since I must also go by teachers’ daily work plans, follow school regulations, understand the school background etc. Irrespective of my role, teachers also understand my duty and know my parameter as per structures in place. I do not have any powers to make any changes in schools’ ways of doing things but can only advise or suggest on how I feel they should follow school routines”.

4.5.1.3 Role of Parents and Other Stakeholders in School Management

Based on his vast experience, Mr. Otunga also gave his views on the role of parents and other stakeholders in the management of schools, as can be seen in the following: “I find school management to be well structured and the administrative pattern well arranged; the principal, with the help of BOM, is at the top. (S)He is followed by the deputy principal, then the teaching staff, then the prefects’ body and finally the students. Parents usually feature in what is called Parent-Teacher Association, PTA. The PTA, as I know it, is fully recognised in the Education Act. It has a role of helping the school to come up with projects they feel their students need. I also know that it is the parents’ duty to come up with suggestions on how they want the school to improve on academic performance and to see ways of motivating students. In addition, a parent can be invited to school in most occasions by the school

administration to assist in guiding the students' disciplinary issues. From my daily work plan, many schools do not invoke the role of parents in their management and that is always advantageous to parents because they fear commitments while other parents simply have social problems”.

Mr. Otunga continued to discuss the role of stakeholders in the following: “I can say that there are many stakeholders in schools. Sponsors are always the main ones if you leave out the government. Sponsors, as I have found out, support schools very much. The Education Act enlisted its representation in school management, Board of Management (BoM). Sponsors do a lot of things depending on their interests. Some build schools, others employ teachers, and some even create awareness. Religious organizations have also been so beneficial in supporting schools in the capacity of sponsorship. As noted, other stakeholders are parents as mandated by law in the Education Act. Parent-Teacher Associations (PTA) chairmen are usually allowed to attend Board of Management meeting (BoM) as members to represent parents. This also applies to some selected local community members. All in all, I think parents and other stakeholders are recognised since they are involved in our education management structures. The problem is that most of them are ignorant of school management procedures, making their contributions substandard in assisting us improve policy making or implementation”.

4.5.1.4 Teachers and Government Activities Regarding Policy Implementation in Schools

Having supervised and reviewed policy implementation in schools, Mr. Otunga had this to say about the activities of the government and teachers in schools as part of policy implementation: “A school is the teachers' home. They see to it that all programmes are successfully followed as expected. Whenever I visit any school, I inform the principal first. Even if I do not and decide to go to any school without giving prior notice, I will always get at least one teacher within the compound, unless it is a national holiday. I find teachers key in the policy implementation process. They teach students, examine them and most importantly, ensure that their daily routine is observed”.

He continued with a discussion of the role of teachers in the learning of students: “In a special school set up, I even find teachers doing a lot more. They are very

instrumental for learning by these disabled students. They do not only teach but also physically and sometimes medically care for disabled students admitted to their schools. They make sure that such children gain from education system necessary. I found out that in some schools where facilities are not very good, teachers guard their students with disability from any risk and advice on their health. In addition to these, according to our government regulation, which is my work kit both in school and in the office, teachers' additional duty in policy implementation is to support principals in administrative duties, talk to parents, advise students on career choice and make them feel encouraged as leaders of future generation. I think teachers are key in our school system running, hence education policy implementers”.

Mr. Otunga also explained the involvement of the government in the implementation activities in the following: “I work for the government and my major role is to assist in policy implementation. It is important to note that the government is the pillar in all activities taking place in a school. It provides financial support for the school running; making implementation a reality and employing teachers and education officers who are in full contact with the students. I also find that the government uses other departments to influence policy implementation. I have participated in many inter-governmental meetings at my level to see how we can help children with disability access education, including involving provincial administrations to use force to make things work in case a parent or a teacher is deterring policy implementation”.

In conclusion, this participant's experiences indicated how his role as an education officer supports access to education for learners with disabilities given the advice and general supervisory assistance he offers. Teachers' roles emerge as key since students depend on them for all of their school needs. It also came out clearly that it is the government that directs all other activities in a manner that influences policy implementation.

4.5.2 Participant R: Mr. Oduor

4.5.2.1 Participant Overview

Participant R, nicknamed Mr. Oduor, is an education officer in Kisumu county. Mr. Oduor stated the following in description of himself and his background: “I am in my early fifties. I taught in secondary school level for fifteen years before joining the ministry as an education officer in the year 2000. Since then, I have worked in different

places although my main work has always been on line of Special Education. Currently, I am doing a Ph.D. in Special Education”.

4.5.2.2 Role as an Implementer

On his role as a policy implementer, Mr. Oduor stated as follows: “I am a government worker. More of what I do is implementation of what the ministry directs me to through circulars, workshops, seminars and education policies. My major role, however, is to assess and supervise disabled students, advise and support teachers on curriculum implementation, report data from schools to the ministry headquarters, work with the community and other stakeholders to create awareness and coordinate with other departments. The list of my duties is long since other duties, most of the time, come through a circular from the ministry”.

Mr. Oduor explained that in his role, he is guided by laid-out policies and procedures that he must follow-he does not make any decisions, as indicated in the following statements: “My work is well structured and all that I do is well determined since I cannot come up with my own opinion to direct schools to improve, but only to advise carefully following the established rules and regulations. I only operate administratively and within the structure and during my work, whatever I find difficult, I simply report to my seniors at the ministry headquarters. Sometimes when I seek advice on an issue, the response takes long due to bureaucratic issues and sometimes due to budget constraints. As an implementer, I have also managed to work with many departments. I remember taking a serious measure after a primary school head teacher reported to me that a father in his school refused to treat his child living with disability causing her not to come to school. I used my influence in the children’s department, police and health ministry and the parent was taken to court, charged and forced to treat the child who was later returned to school.

As an implementer, I have also tried to inspire team work among the people working under me in order to ease my work. I frequently use teachers, parents and other stakeholders to see to it that programs are implemented. However, the idea of implementing policies among some groups has not been easy given that disability in most communities is surrounded by a number of myths and that some members of the society take a lot of offense when I go out to give advice about the importance of taking disabled children to school”.

4.5.2.3 Role of Parents and Other Stakeholders in School Management

I also sought Mr. Oduor's views on the role of parents and other stakeholders in policy implementation and management of schools. He says, "Parents as the providers of students are also important in school management. I know the Education Act is clear on that and so I usually tell my head teachers to use them in implementation. I have, however, noticed that in many schools, parents are only used to bring their children to school and to provide financial assistance in one way or the other, but not in management. In strictly following school management procedures, the ministry requirement is that the Parent-Teacher Association (PTA) is supposed to be very active. It is unfortunate that all schools have parents but are hardly ever engaged properly by the school administrations, although other parents are unwilling to be part of the school management due to other engagements. I have always expected parents to work very closely with teachers for smooth implementation of the school curriculum. I have experienced a situation where parents offer total support to school administration and this turns out to reflect positively on students' academic and extra-curricular performance".

On other stakeholders, he stated the following: "Other stakeholders also have different roles in management. For instance, I find the surrounding community very important to any school's management. My experience with a certain school that was working with its surrounding community was abundant harmony, peace and rapid development. The Education Act allows members of the community to take part in management as BoM members. In our new political dispensation, I find that working with local and national politicians is very important since they influence a lot of development projects in schools. In the Education Act, the law equally allows us to involve politicians in Board of Management as members. These people, in my opinion, when properly involved, tend to influence issues in school systems for policies in place to be implemented effectively".

4.5.2.4 Teachers and Government Activities Regarding Policy Implementation in Schools

Mr. Oduor's views on the activities of the government and teachers in terms of policy implementation were discussed by him in the following: "For proper running of school and smooth implementation of policies in a school system, teachers are very

important. According to my experience as a teacher and now education officer directly working with them, I find them as the main implementers of education policy since they are teaching in class as per the government syllabus, keeping peace among students, motivating them, supporting the disabled's daily needs, coordinating the support staff, assessing equipment for students' daily use, setting and marking exams, disciplining students' offenders etc. As an education officer, I know the main aim of education is provision of knowledge and skills to students. Education policy is all about developing students' knowledge and skills. Teachers are at the centre of policy implementation. Teachers in special schools are not like any other teachers since they have special skills in giving knowledge to special students".

Mr. Oduor continued to discuss the relationship between teachers and the government in the following: "I also find that teachers' activity in policy implementation is and can be stimulated by the government. They are offered trainings and necessary support, made to work effectively through my supervision of their daily work routine and frequent reports to the ministry on the extent of implementation. I find government activities to be encompassing because they set the ball rolling by formulating the policies, creating departments and developing mechanisms on how to achieve them. In reality, education policy implementation is determined by the government activities from the beginning to the end; the government comes up with the curriculum, creates structures, funds it, employs personnel, brings students to school, and pays fees for the students then set goals to be met. All these activities including supervision and advisory role are the scope of the work I am doing for the government".

In conclusion, Mr. Oduor's experiences paint a picture of how the work of an education officer is very important and it is through these officers that the government gets feedback from the real implementers, who are teachers. He also revealed that the way in which the education policy is implemented is well structured and that nobody in the line of administration can change anything before the top decision-makers come up with another design. Based on the discussion with Mr. Oduor, it was evident that implementation of policy is more of the government's role and that others are just invited to participate.

From the experiences gathered from the two education officers, these officers work under tight programs drawn from the top officials in the government. They assess

teachers in order to ascertain whether the government policies are implemented according to the curriculum drawn from the Ministry of Education. It also was apparent that the teachers' duty allocation is informed by the Ministry of Education and as such, policies are implemented at the grassroots level. They work in a formal and well-structured manner with complete support from the government. The government's role is however mentioned as very active and is the backbone of all that is happening in policy implementation. The experiences here also show that other stakeholders' roles are not well structured. Although they are recognised by the ministry, their participation is not predictable, except for the sponsor.

Table 4.7 Special schools' education officers' views on a sorted theme

Themes / Names	Mr Otunga	Mr Oduor
Education background	Master	Master
Role in School	Supervise Implementation	Supervise Implementation
Decision making	Formal	Formal
process	Administrative	Administrative
Major stakeholder	Government	Government
Parents role	Big	Big
Government role	Active and structured	Active and structured
Other stakeholder's role	Many. sponsor Controlled	Many. Sponsor Controlled
Teachers role	Formal and structured	Formal and structured
Networking	Not structured	Not structured

4.6 Fifth Group of Participants: Focus Group Discussion

4.6.1 Participant R: St. George Special School

4.6.1.1 Overview, Teachers' Role, Curriculum, and Nature of Students

The discussion with the six teachers in this school was done in a school board room, and the highlights of the discussion revealed the following information. The school has only nine teachers, all of whom are well trained to handle special students. It is, however, strange that not all the teaching staff are permanently employed by the

Teachers' Service Commission (TSC) despite the school having a population of 70 handicapped students.

The discussion over teachers' roles revealed that the teachers' work is very crucial since they interact with students daily to give them knowledge and as such, their key role is to teach. It also was revealed that teachers perform a lot of work to making teaching a success; they have a syllabus given by the Ministry of Education. The group revealed that from the syllabus, they develop their own schemes of work, coming up with lesson plans and making lesson notes. The discussions mentioned that once they are inside the classroom, they do not just teach but try to understand the students' differences given that most of the disabled students are very emotional. The teachers described their experience by saying that understanding a handicapped student means proper exposition and use of well-thought-out methods and apparatus. Apart from all that, the teachers said that they also form part of the school administration and give guidance and counselling to both students and parents on various issues.

On the curriculum, the teachers agreed that it is the most important document in their work since all of their planning on academics is centred on it. The discussions also revealed that the curriculum is a national document structurally formulated by the government to create uniformity in all schools. The curriculum reflects what each class is taught in the school terms and yearly up to the fourth year. The national examination is set following its content. The teachers' discussions noted problems of using a uniform curriculum in all schools since special needs schools' set-ups have individuals with different kinds of handicaps and they have different needs in terms of fitting in the curriculum. They also agreed that some students have severe handicap problems while others have less severe problems. Therefore, the way a student is treated in class depends on the severity of the student's handicap problem. This calls for more teachers and a more suitable curriculum.

4.6.1.2 Parents' Roles and School Infrastructural Facilities

The teachers mentioned parents' roles as being very crucial. However, they claimed that the parents are never seen often even in their PTA meetings. Very few parents attend such meetings. The discussion confirmed that no PTA projects had been planned for this year. It was clarified that though some parents come to school only to bring personal items to their children, other parents had never stepped on the school

compound since their children joined form one. The parents have not been very supportive in terms of motivating teachers or students in any way.

The discussion participants agreed that infrastructure is the most crucial element for all handicapped students in the school compound. Although the school has some pathways and classrooms, a lot more is needed: “We still lack proper buildings with ramps, elevators and nice corridors”. The teachers also noted the need for good and modified toilets not far from the classrooms. On the classrooms, the teachers felt that they need to be a little more spacious classrooms to accommodate wheelchairs and other special supportive equipment. Laboratories and other buildings such as dining halls should have toilets within them to allow students to access them easily. On the same note, the teachers felt that students from financially-humble backgrounds should be supported to get personal equipment to enhance their movement within the school since some of these students’ gadgets are old while others are outdated, causing them more difficulty with their handicap.

4.6.1.3 Government Activities and Challenges in Special Schools

The teachers listed many activities that the government is doing to support handicapped students in their school: construction of modern buildings, employment of teachers, provision of curricula, and inspection of schools. School fee payments and many others were also mentioned.

On the challenges faced, the teachers noted that although the government is trying to support the schools, more attention needs to be given to special schools in terms of teachers’ employment; teachers are very important for program implementation, and inadequacy is a big let-down regarding implementation success. Other areas that the teachers mentioned as a challenge were the following: a rigid curriculum and class schedule, inadequate environmental infrastructural facilities, stigmatization, cultural beliefs, and delays of government financial support to schools. The teachers also felt that the government needs to align the curriculum to meet the special needs of handicapped students. They noted that the current curriculum is unfavourable for the special students.

In conclusion, the experiences of the teachers provide insight into how important they are for policy implementation. However, all of the teachers’ duties are regulated by the government’s bureaucratic system. The discussion also noted the need

to establish better ways that parents or guardians of handicapped students can be brought into the mainstream to support schools in policy implementation.

4.6.2 Participant S; Nico Hauser School for the Blind

4.6.2.1 Overview, Teachers' Role, Curriculum, and Nature of Students

The discussions with the teachers in this school were quite interesting. They reported that the school has only eleven teaching staff members against a population of one hundred and twenty students, among whom eighty are partially blind and others have different complicated cases of blindness. The teachers revealed that all of them were well trained to handle special students. However, the number was much less compared to the number of students. Moreover, within the teaching staff, only nine are employed by the government while others are working on a contract basis.

The teachers indicated how their work is well planned and regulated by the curriculum from the Ministry of Education. Characteristically, the discussion indicated that anytime a new term begins, teachers start their work with a meeting to allocate lessons as per their trained specialty, draw timetables on how they will be attending classes without clashing, and also develop a duty roster in which every teacher is allocated a week or two to be responsible for the running of the affairs of the school. Other duties that the discussion mention included guiding students in and outside the class about their career, attending to extra-curricular needs, and disciplining unruly students. They agreed that in education policy, their duties are very numerous but extremely regulated by the curriculum.

A look at the curriculum and the nature of the students was equally interesting given that the discussion found that the curriculum was too rigid in terms of the needs of the visually impaired students. The teachers noted that different learners had different levels of blindness and therefore required different levels of assistance. For instance, other students could see whenever powerful devices were used, while a few had a problem with light and the sun. The discussions claimed that it is unfortunate that the curriculum is the same for all of these students: "we must use brail and a lot of lecture and because some don't use brails, we must dictate a lot, meaning actual teaching time is always less". The discussion revealed how teaching these students consumed a lot of time while the school routine is programmed, and the national examination time is the same for all students in the country. The teachers also supported the idea that some

subjects such as mathematics are not very student-friendly due to the use of formulas and experiments. They noted the difficulties they undergo helping these students comprehend these concepts.

4.6.2.2 Parents' Role and School Infrastructural Facilities

The discussion of the parents' participation in this school revealed that their role was minimal despite the role that the ministry attaches to them. The teachers expressed their low experience with parents' work in supporting them. It came out that some had not visited their children since admission and were never frequent at the PTA meetings, which are supposed to unite them as a school community. The teachers also accused some parents of failing to come when called over their children's lack of discipline. They however consoled themselves that God has been with them, being a Catholic school. The Catholic priest and sister principal have always supported them in counselling the students whenever the parents failed to come.

The teachers agreed that the school is trying to make learning friendly for these students. They recognised the school administration's effort in the improvisation of pathways and sideways that guide students to various destinations within the school compound and the fencing of the school compound, which showed the students their parameters and enhanced monitoring of their movement all the time. The members of the discussion, however, felt that more facilities were needed to make their work easier: favourable lighting in all classroom, enough brail, personal equipment such as walk sticks, glasses with different lenses, and sun glasses.

4.6.2.3 Government Activities and Challenges in Special Schools

The teachers also discussed the activities of the government as per their experiences in the school to include the employment of teachers, the deployment of principals, the development of curriculum, the supervision of the curriculum, providing students for the schools, and setting the national examination and marking it. The teachers also listed other activities such as the construction of buildings and support for students' personal needs. The discussion participants agreed that government activities make for the smooth running of the school since all programs and routines are formulated from the ministry headquarters. The teachers also indicated that all government activities are formal in the way they are done and that the school must always comply with and give regular reports to the government.

The teachers however noted that despite all the support they get from various quarters, they have several challenges which they identified as follows: inadequate teaching staff, little equipment, lack of modern technology, and few buildings among others. They also feel that the syllabus needs to be improved to have all types of visually-impaired students in consideration. The parents need to be motivated in order to help them encourage the students to accept themselves as they are and finally, the government should provide adequate financial support to schools at the right time so that debts and laps in the routine curriculum can be avoided. Finally, from the focus group discussion, I can confirm that the teachers are very interested in their work and are ready to help the students even under the pressure of a heavy workload. Government routine programmes need to be supported with proper facilitation so that teachers can find work easier. The provision of equipment and required facilities at the right time will also solve most of the challenges the teachers face. Parents need to come out forcefully to give their support of policy implementation.

4.6.3 Participant T: Father Auderaa Secondary School for the Deaf

4.6.3.1 Overview, Teachers' Role, Curriculum, and Nature of Students

The conversations with teachers showed that the school has nine teaching staff, six females and three males, with eighty-four students with different kinds of deafness. Among the teachers, seven are employed permanently by the government while others are working on a contract basis. The teachers also mentioned that they are all trained with different work experience.

Regarding their roles, the discussion isolated the following as the composition of what they do daily: teaching students using the ministry-provided syllabus, maintaining discipline among the students both inside class and outside class, helping the principal in any administrative work assigned, and guiding students on outdoor activities, which sometimes involves outings. The teachers also explained that teaching deaf students is never an easy task; one requires an added knowledge of sign language apart from just interpreting the normal curriculum.

On the curriculum, a lot of experiences were shared by the group members; it was agreed that the curriculum used in schools is mostly uniform for all students with very minimal adjustment for disabled people. Because of such a curriculum, the teachers felt that some of their classes are never effective because of the various

learning needs that deaf students have. The teachers went further on to single out subjects such as English and Kiswahili as some of the subjects they found to be of great difficulty in teaching. The discussion also noted that deaf people have their own language, sign language, and that that is what should be tested in their curriculum and not English or Kiswahili, as it currently is. The teachers suggested the need for the curriculum to consider limiting subjects that require a lot of explanation for this type of disability and also felt that the use of sign language should not be too extensive because students get tired when there is little variation of the teaching methods. They claimed that history, geography, and other similar subjects all need to be taught in a different way from the traditional methods. The teachers felt that sciences and mathematics where practical and formulas are derived are unfavourable for them and the curriculum needs to consider this.

The discussion noted different types of deafness and all require different attention in terms of teaching. The group talked of varied experiences where some students can hear just a little, and others are completely deaf and dumb, while some can talk but cannot be heard well unless you use a special listening device. All of these students expect the curriculum attention to be tailored appropriately to their education. The teachers described how in the current system in their school, all of these students are grouped together, and it is upon the teacher to see how to handle them. The teachers felt that teaching such students requires different programs and enough teaching staff for them to acquire appropriate knowledge and skill sets.

4.6.3.2 Parents' Role and School Infrastructural Facilities

The discussion with the teachers clarified minimal parental participation because most deaf students in the school come from foster families; some lost their parents while others are neglected due to their situation and how society views them. The discussion, however, agreed that parents are supposed to be very instrumental in supporting teachers, especially in disciplinary matters and career choice matters for their children. This was noted to be lacking. The teachers indicated that the role of parents according to ministry directives is to include them in frequent meetings so that they can help school administration in coming up with development projects and support in disciplinary cases within the school. The group stressed that most parents were never bothered with their children's welfare.

Over infrastructure, the teachers stated that the school had an inadequate infrastructure for them to make learning effective for their special students. They talked about some classrooms lacking audio speakers to support hearing, no well-equipped laboratory for science practice, and no concern for each type of deafness learning infrastructural requirement. They stated that there was over-reliance on sign language interpretation as a substitute for facilities rather than embracing new technology to support learning.

4.6.3.3 Government Activities and Challenges in Special Schools

On government activities, the discussion mentioned that experiences with government activities varied greatly. They cited that government activities were supported by the policies in place: develop curriculum, train and employ teachers, supervise curriculum delivery, register schools, select and admit students in various schools, construct school buildings, deploy school principals, and provide financial support for daily school management. The discussion group also mentioned the government's role in punishing teachers and non-teaching staff in case of non-compliance, disqualifying schools in cases of examination cheating, and transferring teachers to where it feels their services are most needed. They also mentioned that the government delegates the financial management of the school to the BoM.

The teachers during the discussion expressed the following challenges they experienced daily as they encountered their students: strict adherence to regulations/curriculum, inadequate teachers, lack of environmental infrastructural facilities, social beliefs, inadequate financing, poor technology, lack of sign language interpreters, inadequate education officers to support supervision, and lack of support from other stakeholders.

In conclusion the discussion revealed the need to consider different types of deaf students in curriculum formulation. The employment of enough teachers and sign language interpreters can also help reduce the problem of students failing to cope in other subjects. It also came out clearly that the government has the overall power to give handicapped children admission to schools and to be taught comfortably given the fact that they register all schools and admit children into the school systems.

In the three focus group discussions, the teachers aired their views concerning their experiences in schools with students living with a disability. It was clear that their

roles are well stipulated and structured. The management is carried out under strict rules and regulations. Members also noted the need for curriculum modification to suit deaf and visually impaired students. Infrastructural facilities and equipment were also mentioned as impediments to access for most handicapped students. However, it was agreed that despite their role in implementation, any attempt to change anything in the curriculum may take time due to formalities involved and the way in which decisions are made bureaucratically by the government.

Table 4.8 Special schools' principals' views on a sorted theme

Themes/Names	St George	Nico Hauser	Fr Auderaa
Learner type	Handicap	Visual impairment	Deaf
Teacher's work	Structured	Structured	Structured
Curriculum suggestion	No modification	Less modification	Modification
Parent role	Not seen	Not seen	Not seen
Infrastructure/Equip	Very essential	Very essential	Very essential
Major challenge	Infrastructure	Curriculum/ infrast	Curriculum/inf
Major stakeholder	Government	Government	Government
Other stakeholder	Catholic	Catholic	Catholic
Decision on curriculum	Government	Government	Government
Process to improve	Administrative	Administrative	Administrative
Decision they make	Formal	Formal	Formal

4.7 Conclusion

From the analysis of all seventeen respondents and three focus group discussions, eight themes were drawn for further analysis in readiness for interpretation and synthesis: decision-making, awareness, cultural beliefs, curriculum, environmental and physical infrastructure, teachers' roles, stakeholders/government levels of authority, and parental support.

CHAPTER 5

THEMES AND PARTICIPANTS' IMPRESSIONS OF POLICY IMPLEMENTATION DIRECTIONS

5.1 Introduction

This section discusses the identified themes drawn from the analysed data from chapter four to serve as a summary. Braun and Clarke (2006) and Yin (2011) established that data analysis includes a lot more in a qualitative study: providing themes, revising themes, naming themes, and finally coming up with a report. The study used these themes to highlight the key issues that frequently came out during the data analysis.

5.2 A Review of the Themes vs. Existing Laws, Policies, and Procedures

5.2.1 Grassroots Decision-Making

Persons with disabilities should have an opportunity to be actively involved in the decision-making processes for policies and programs, including those policies in which they are directly involved (Löve et al., 2017). The United Nations has advocated for the representation of people with disabilities for equality through the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD). The convention reflects the fundamental principle that people that are affected by laws should be able to participate in making the same laws that affect them. Therefore, it is essential to have people with disabilities in positions of power and policymaking to enable them to contribute to the law-making procedures.

In Kenya, according to the Constitution of Kenya (2010), people with disabilities are represented in parliament, the senate, and the national and county governments. In parliament, there are twelve seats where the political parties can nominate people with disabilities. In the senate, out of 67 members, two seats are for

representatives of persons with disabilities, one woman and one man. In the national government, at least one person with a disability is nominated for every ministry to represent his or her interests. However, in the education sector, the national education board makes and implements the laws that affect that sector. According to the Basic Education Act (2013), one out of the fourteen board members must be a person with a disability. In the same Act of Parliament, at the county level, one out of twelve members of the County Education Boards must be a representative of persons with a disability. These posts are essential to the ability of persons with a disability to contribute to the law-making process either from the grassroots level, at the county level, or the national level, or at the parliamentary, senatorial, or ministerial levels. In this way they can identify their own needs and determine how to meet them as they forge their paths in this world.

Furthermore, the persons with a disability under an Act of Parliament have formed a government corporation known as The National Council for Persons with Disabilities (NCPWD). This corporation was formed on January 9, 2004, under the Persons with Disabilities Act (2003) with the primary goal of the representation of persons of disabilities in the arms of the government. The organization looks at the interests of people with disabilities in all ministries of the executive and in the senate and parliament, as discussed above.

5.2.2 Awareness

The lack of awareness of education issues surrounding students with disabilities is a common problem. The problem affects the role of service providers, the communities they live in, and policymakers because they are unable to confront and dedicate resources to these issues. To raise this awareness, the United Nations Educational Scientific and Cultural Organization came up with a Special Needs Education Policy framework (2009) that outlines the strategy to create awareness of the specialized facilities that students with disabilities require. The policy framework that will help outline future policies on the topic states that the issue is best dealt with through advocates for persons with disabilities, and these advocates should create awareness through campaigns, and conventions with the policymakers to solve the issues.

Additionally, in the Constitution of Kenya (2010), The republic of Kenya, 2017 Education Act (2017) Cap 211, there is a law that provides for a resource center in every county which enables registration of persons with a disability. The resource center is also a training facility for special education teachers in their various fields. The resource center also acts as a psychological and educational assessment center for special education teachers. These centers are for persons with disabilities and they run all awareness programs in their respective counties.

Finally, the other important aspect of awareness is the media perspective. In recent years, persons with disabilities have taken to “the big stage” through the media to express their need for representation in the areas of the government. The publicity they receive facilitates awareness campaigns for persons with disabilities, which is vital for the community.

5.2.3 Cultural Beliefs

Cultural beliefs in this context refer to the negative attitudes and explanations that the society has formulated over the years about persons with disabilities. In many communities, the religious beliefs about persons with disabilities are that these people have committed a sin within the family in the past and that this is a form of punishment for the atonement of that sin. This belief limits the roles that persons with disabilities are allowed to play in society. These old and festering beliefs can ruin the chances that these people have of life in the society because they lead to discrimination. Therefore, it is crucial that they be revised to show that these individuals are human beings.

In the constitution, the Persons with Disabilities Act (2004) forbids the discrimination of persons with disabilities. The law outlines the offenses and penalties that come with the discrimination of these persons. These laws help prosecute the people that discriminate against persons with a disability because of their cultural beliefs. The concealment of persons with disabilities is punishable by a monetary payment, imprisonment, or both. The Act also outlines that if any doctor fails to attend to persons with disabilities, he or she can be prosecuted. The same laws are also found in the Basic Education Act (2013), which helps to protect special needs students from discrimination by their teachers due to their cultural beliefs and advocates for the recognition of their presence in the society.

5.2.4 Curriculum

The Kenyan education system has not installed any curriculum for students living with disabilities. A curriculum for students living with a disability is crucial because it dictates the pace at which they learn and take in knowledge from different subjects and courses. According to Ololube (2015), the curriculum is a total guided learning experience designed to facilitate learning in an organized order. Each step is meant to help one learn the basics and progress to an advanced area of learning.

The regular education curriculum has instructional methods that are done in a group setting (Oswalt, 2010). The same curricula cannot work for a student living with a disability because he or she needs intensive, individualized instruction. A special needs curriculum requires more attention to children's needs that will help them cope with the learning requirements.

The Kenyan government has considered this and through the Kenya Institute of Curriculum Development has set into motion curriculum designs for special needs students. In a KICD press release on 28th May 2017 there a new curriculum design was announced for special needs schools. The government has ordered that at least two schools in every county must be set up for students living with a disability. The draft explains that a framework will handle curricula that will enable disabled students aim for their dream courses and careers. Until then, students will use the regular curriculum for these students.

5.2.5 Environmental and Physical Infrastructure

Students with disabilities vary from deaf to blind students to those without legs. The learning institutions with such students are supposed to have specialized facilities to enable them to go through the learning process. The goals of infrastructure systems in schools are to increase student attendance, motivate staff, and to improve student academic achievement. There is a proven link between school architecture and its occupants, the students, and teachers. It is imperative that schools have the right facilities to enhance the students' achievements and their overall performance on the national examinations.

According to the Kenyan Basic Education Act (2013), it is the role of the county government to install specialized facilities for special needs students and their institutions. The county's government was tasked to ensure that facilities were installed

in institutions for special needs students to have the right equipment for their academic performance. However, according to the Kenya Education Act (2017), the role was re-tasked to the national government through the Cabinet Secretary to ensure that institutions for special needs are provided with specialized facilities to attain the same school objectives and goals.

Additionally, learners with disabilities require a safe and conducive environment to motivate the staff and to improve the academic achievements of students. According to a UNESCO report (2009) on the educational policy framework, the health and safety of learners are a vital part of ensuring that students have a conducive environment for learning. As consulting NGOs on education policies, these policies were vital in writing laws for education in Kenya. The policies recommend that the physical environment that institutions operate in must be accessible and disability friendly. The report emphasizes that the government should ensure that the schools eliminate barriers that make schools unfriendly to learners with disabilities and special needs.

5.2.6 Teacher's Role

Teachers are the most crucial aspect of learning because they influence and teach the students, and teachers are an essential part of the development of special needs students. Apart from the facilitation of their academic progress, they help students with their socialization skills, impart life skills, and help them with their student behaviors and attitudes (Bradley, 2017). The role of teachers is to ensure that students with disabilities learn life skills that will help them adjust to the society such as hygiene, dressing, handling money, and day-to-day decision-making. The teachers' roles also include teaching them appropriate and acceptable behavior. For students with disabilities that exhibit aggressive, offensive, or objectionable behaviors, teachers will educate them to behave in a socially-acceptable manner.

In light of the vital roles of teachers in the lives of students with disabilities, the government must ensure that there are teachers trained to teach them. There must also be policies to ensure that the teachers are awarded the facilities and training they need for special needs schools. The Basic Education Act (2013) outlines that the government, through the Cabinet Secretary, shall ensure that every institution for special needs learners and students with a disability be provided with the appropriately-trained

teachers and non-teaching staff. Additionally, the Teachers Service Commission Cap 212 of the Kenyan Constitution states that a special allowance is payable to teachers for services in teaching in special schools and institutions for those that possess diplomas or certificates in special needs education. Through these laws, the institutions for students with disabilities should have enough teaching staff for all its students with special needs or disabilities.

5.2.7 Stakeholders/Government Levels of Authority

Stakeholders and government authorities are partners and collaborators that contribute to the education policies that govern the education system in the country. In Kenya, the stakeholders in the education sector are organizations that form the education system. These stakeholders have roles that are vital to the smooth running of the education system. The stakeholders include the Teachers Service Commission (TSC), the Kenya National Union of Teachers (KNUT), the Kenya Union of Post Primary Education Teachers (KUPPET), universities, the Ministry of Education Science and Technology (MOEST), the Kenya Institute of Curriculum Development (KICD), the National Council of Persons with Disabilities (NCPWD), the Kenya National Examination Council (KNEC), and NGOs such as UNESCO.

The roles that each of these stakeholders play towards the education of students with disabilities are outlined in their organizations and are vital to ensuring that they receive their basic education needs. The TSC, which is responsible for the remuneration of teachers, has provided in the Teachers Service Commission Act (2009) that a special allowance be paid to teachers in special needs schools: 10% of their minimum basic salary. NGOs such as UNESCO are involved in the special needs education system through their education policy frameworks and awareness campaigns. UNESCO has stated in their policy frameworks that they are advocates of equality and human rights, which include persons with disabilities. On the other hand, UNESCO can also help fund the National Council of Persons with Disabilities (NCPWD) to help them pay for the fees for some students with disabilities.

The KICD in 2017 included persons with disabilities through their initiative in creating an educational curriculum for students with special needs. The curriculum will be implemented in the special needs schools in the country where teachers will be

trained. KNUT is a union organization that looks into the welfare of teachers countrywide, including special needs teachers (KNUT, 2015). Their role in special needs education is to ensure that teachers in special needs schools are represented in the government.

Universities and colleges are also stakeholders in the higher levels of learning in the education system, and their role is in both training and the education of special needs students with disabilities. The universities and colleges are training centers for special needs teachers, and they provide education to those students that have successfully graduated from secondary education.

The Ministry of Education is another stakeholder that implements the laws and policies in the education sector. The constitution provides that persons with disabilities be represented in the Ministry offices to advise on the policies affecting special students and students with disabilities. Finally, KNEC, which is the examination body, has laws in the KNEC Act (2012) that allow for examination setting that is for special needs schools. The law continuously states that the council should include a representative for persons with disabilities to represent their interests.

5.2.8 Parental Support

Parental support is an integral part of the growth of students with disabilities. They are the first influence that children have in their lives obviously. Several types of research have concluded that parental support is a crucial factor that influences the academic achievements of students with a disability. In a study on the influence of parental responsibilities on the participation of children with disabilities in education programs, the research concluded that parents are an essential aspect in their life because they are the sole bill payer of healthcare, safe environment, and educational costs for students with disabilities (Mwita, 2012). The study further concludes that the failure of parents to support them and to get involved in their education leads to the failure of these students in their education and life prospects.

In the Kenyan Constitution (2010), the Persons with Disabilities Act (2004) outlines laws that help parents in the financing of students with disabilities. The law in this act states that parents that cannot offer their children financial support for education will receive an allowance from the National Council for Persons with Disabilities

(NCPWD). Additionally, there are stipulations in the same act that forbid parents from secluding their disabled children away from the society. This offense will result in a fine, imprisonment or both after prosecution. Furthermore, the Education Act (2017) provides that the students with disabilities be eligible for loans, fees, and allowance funding for education at the county level. This provision, that students with disabilities are eligible for study and to continue their education in Kenya, is another form of parental support.

5.3 Participants' experiences – A thematic review

5.3.1 Decision-making, awareness, and cultural beliefs

Attending school is a mandatory government policy, and this makes any school-age child have no option but to attend school. However, given that children at their age cannot make any decision, parents are obligated to make the decisions on their behalf in terms of access to education. Surprisingly, experiences gathered from the participant demonstrates the direct decision-making role by the government. The principals in all the three schools stated how they rely on the government to make decisions concerning the admission of any child into the school system. The study confirmed that children's entry into school is controlled by the government through the Ministry of education. Selection is done by a committee at their central selection headquarters, pass marks are determined by the ministry, and when some learners fail to report in a school given to him, the principal has to report to the ministry for replacement. As such, decisions regarding access to education are very complicated in many instances and in this study, we find government agents making decisions for a child to join a school more than the parent. This is so because of the authority they have from the ministry, and teachers are usually overruled in some decision-making even though they are at the grassroots level. We can recall the case where Mr. Roko had to run to education officers to reprimand the head teacher to have his daughter access education in that school. This was a case in which the parent insisted on wanting his child to be admitted to that particular school despite the administration explaining that the school did not have the necessary facilities to befit the child's disability. Looking back at Stanley's story, the little child that was rescued by the government and raised until school-going age, we can fairly

state that access to education is possible for anyone provided that the government steps in to help relocate the learners to appropriate schools befitting their state of mind and body. From all three focus group discussions the most glaring role of the government mentioned was to admit learners to the school, meaning it is the government that makes decisions concerning access since they make the final decision through their agent.

Education officer Mr. Oduor stated that the government has structured policy on school management and only allocates some of its roles to stakeholders. Mr. Otunga on the other hand explained that the government role of school registration gives her the mandate to make any decisions on the admissions of learners.

Awareness is very important for policy implementation. For instance, it is difficult to get learners into a school without knowing where the school is located. The experiences discussed in this paper reveal a clear lack of awareness. Starting with Norbert and Edward, who both lived with their grandmothers, they explained how their grandmothers were ignorant on education matters and as such, had never thought of deaf people being capable of accessing formal education in school; it took them some time before they were made aware of the nature of schools their deaf grandchildren could attend. Anita's parents were also ignorant about the appropriate school for their daughter and so she ended up in a regular secondary school in which she could not comfortably stay and learn due to lack of disability-considerate facilities. Selly's experiences reveal how very few influential people actually know what happens in the society and how they discuss important issues without inviting the larger portion of the society that is affected by these issues the most. Roko also expressed not being well conversant with most government information given that he was always busy and the community mobilizer usually did not consider time for calling such meetings, and he argued that some of the agendas and deliberations of those meeting are usually predetermined. Interestingly, even the teachers seemed to be not well conversant with other government regulations, a sign of a lack of awareness. Some teachers even refused to admit being ignorant about these regulations until they were reprimanded by the ministry officials as was noticed in Mercy's and David's experiences.

Cultural beliefs are such a deep-rooted thing that I found them to be a big barrier to implementation of education policy and more so in relation to accessing education for disable children. The experiences of Moss, one of the disabled learners, explains

how the community views him as an albino. This boy was not happy at all nor was he able to be out freely in public due to scorning and death threats because of community beliefs that some parts of his body could be used by magicians to heal others, and he had to hide most of the time making him delay his access to education. Edward and Norbert were both deaf though from different backgrounds, and their disability status in the society made them not stay with their parents. They lived with their grandmothers, who were too old to take care of them properly or even support their education at the right age. Apart from that they were hated, abused, and beaten by their fellow learners because of their disability. Edward's and Mercy's mothers were unfortunate in the community's sight because of giving birth to disabled children, and their husbands had to abandon them because of fear of the culture. Selly, the blind mother of Jacky, had a double tragedy; she was left by her husband because of her disability and was not welcomed in the community because she was blind and only gave birth to blind children. Lidbro's situation was worse given that she was such a young girl who because of what she heard from the community made her fear to the extent of running away from her deaf son. Stanley's case also tells how culture is so cruel to disabled children. He was found by the police at a tender age abandoned by his parents because of fear of what the culture believed.

In school, the discussions with the teachers in the focus groups tell of their experiences of the non-participation of most parents in school activities when invited because of fear of being identified as parents of children of the disabled, and the same sentiment was expressed by both Lidbro and Selly, who claimed that they did not participate due to societal feeling, they feared being seen as parents of disabled learners and as such they tended to hide their identity from society.

5.3.2 Curriculum, Environmental Physical Infrastructure, and the Teachers' Role

A school curriculum is generally the lessons and academic content taught in a school. From the participants' experiences we realised that the curriculum for schools in Kenya is formulated by the government. The teachers in all three focus group discussions indicated the use of the curriculum while attending to their classes because it is a requirement for teaching all learners without altering the content irrespective of the situation. The three principals, Richard, Horrins, and Jacinta, also stated that the

curriculum that they follow in school is very formal given to them by the Ministry of education and it is their duty to implement it the way it is, since all schools within the republic are assessed using it centrally. Education officers Mr. Otunga and Mr. Oduor confirmed their major role in the supervision of how the curriculum is implemented in all schools within their county. They maintained that the curriculum is well structured to develop the learners' knowledge in preparation for the world of work, and it also assists develops learners socially in preparation to economic and political challenges.

The experiences of the learners and teachers were however different in view of the curriculum's implementation. The focus group discussions with Fr. Auderaa and Nico Hauser, revealed the curriculum to be too rigid for their learners, making implementing it difficult. They cited several subjects that did not favour learners with different disabilities given the facilities available in the schools. Equally some learners, Edward, Norbert, Mercy, and even Jacky had some issues with some aspects of the curriculum in relation to some content and their disability.

The experiences that the participants cited show the importance of infrastructure for learners with a disability. In all three focus group discussions the major issue that came out openly was infrastructural facilities, which were not adequate despite the government, sponsor, and other well-wishers that support the schools having them available. The principals on the same note expressed that there were few infrastructural facilities despite the government's effort to make them comfortable. Principals Jancita and Richard confirmed the government's allocation of funds to their schools to build classrooms and to buy some equipment so as to reduce some of the infrastructural problems. The education officers also noticed the insufficiency of infrastructure as a hindrance to accessing education by some of learners and more so for the handicapped children.

The learners' experiences were more real given that Mercy could not cope in the secondary school in which she was admitted due to a lack of infrastructural facilities. Jackline, Mercy, and Edward were sent away from various schools because of a lack of such infrastructural facilities. David had a bad experience getting ejected from the school he was studying in before the accident simply because his disability status could not be accommodated by the school facilities. The experiences of the parents also show how they feel vulnerable when their children cannot access any

school because of lack of facilities. Roko had to consult education officers to make her daughter access education. Edward's grandmother became desperate when her grandson was sent away from school because it did not have appropriate facilities to support his learning.

Teachers on the other hand find it very difficult to teach learners effectively when facilities are lacking, handicapped learners need good walkways and paths to support their movement for example. They also require good buildings with ramps, elevators, and lifts for ease of access, and neat modern toilets are also important. Visually-impaired learners require proper demarcations so that they can locate their perimeter, well-ventilated buildings, well-lit, good pathways, and walkways with well-arranged pillars to support their movement. They also need ramps, elevators, and lifts to ease their movement without hitches. The deaf require good buildings fixed with speakers and amplifiers to support their hearing. Among the three disabilities mentioned, the discussion groups indicated that there are other types of disabilities that tend to present themselves making infrastructural facilities much more varied.

The parents' experiences indicated how they were committed to having their children move, talk, and see. Mercy for example bought her prosthetic leg after they felt that the wheel chair she was using previously was restricting her movement. David's parents also bought special supporting equipment for him after realising that the wheelchair was preventing him from being free. In the case of Jacky, she started by using a normal stick because her mother could not afford a cane; however, when she got a sponsor she managed to get a cane. Other learners such as Edward, Norbert, and Anita got personal equipment but after some time because of lack of exposure and probably due to poverty among their caretakers. Stanley however got his personal equipment early enough because he was living in a foster home and had a sponsor.

The discussion within the focus groups shows how personal equipment is important for learners with disabilities and more so while in the school compound. They explained that because of the importance of learners' personal equipment, the school administration seeks support from any sponsor or ministry to support those whose parents are unable to buy the required equipment. The teachers stated that learners with a disability cannot learn without this equipment; they must use special glasses to see even if it is only slightly, they need to move from one destination to the other, and they

must at least be supported to hear by use of earphones. The teachers explained further that the use of this equipment is not the same for all learners but it is usually directed by the doctors. Discussion with the principals indicated that learners keep on changing their equipment as they grow and as they get instructed from the doctors. The teachers try their best to support these special learners in school.

5.3.3 Stakeholders/Government Levels of Authority and Parental Support

The experiences of the participants indicated how the government plays a key role in realising policy implementation in terms of access to education by learners living with disability. The government comes up with elaborate goals and how to implement them. Education officers Mr. Oduor and Mr. Otunga said that the government is the main stakeholder and the major determinant of the implementation process through a well-developed structure. It is the same government that appoints and gives power to other stakeholders to support it in policy implementation.

The teachers' experiences during the focus group discussion indicated they are stakeholders and that their role is very important in policy implementation for learners to access education in the school in which they are studying. They explained how they draw power and authority from the Ministry of Education since they are entrusted to make sure that children get the required education as per the curriculum. They also mentioned that their everyday duty is supervised by the principal and the Ministry of Education officials. The education officers confirmed that the role of teachers in implementing policies relating to access to education by learners living with disability should not be ignored. The government should involve teachers more in policy formulation and implementation. The principals' experiences indicated their role as stakeholders to be formal and totally determined by the appointing authority, which is the government.

According to them, all of the programs in the school management are under them. They must work with learners and teachers very closely to satisfy their work plan, and they also devise a way of working with sponsors, parents, and the community so that the programs in the school can go on as expected. They claim that all the work they do must be reported to the ministry monthly for accountability. Discussion with the education officials revealed that their work mainly involves monitoring schools on behalf of the Ministry of Education. They supervise the teachers and principals and

have some authority over other stakeholders at the lower levels. Their involvement in decision-making is minimal.

Of all the participants that shared their experiences with me, it came out that the parents are supposed to be part of the policy implementation in the school setup. They are never consistent in their role since their participation is not all that structured and the government has not much authority over them. Parents through the PTA are stakeholders but in many cases are out of the picture because of their being reluctant to participate in school. The experiences with the focus groups, principals, and education officers revealed that the located local community is a stakeholder following the government format and the regulations of the school management. They are supposed to support policy implementation but since their work is not well structured not much emphasis is ever put on them by the school administrations. Education officers Mr. Oduor and Mr. Otunga mentioned that other stakeholders in school management are sponsors, other ministries, NGOs, and departments. They stated that these groups of stakeholders are very important since they are instrumental in supporting schools in different ways to realise government policy in education; however, their involvement in schools is not properly structured, making the government authority over them very minimal.

5.4 Conclusion

The discussion gives an imprint of the participants' views while answering the study objectives. It was evident that decision-making is very essential for meaningful policy implementation. Learners living with a disability need proper direction both in terms of the curriculum and infrastructure given their inadequacy. Awareness comes out clearly as essential for the entire community to understand and implement policies. Cultural beliefs were also identified as an impediment to both policymakers and learners living with a disability. Negative perceptions about people living with a disability make it difficult to implement policies relating to access to education by disabled learners. The curriculum was also found to be unfavourable for these types of learners. In addition, lack of adequate infrastructure and special facilities was cited as a major impediment to their access to education. Teachers' roles also need to be

emphasized more than ever in implementing policies related to the education of these individuals. This is because teachers are heavily relied upon for the success of learners living with a disability in a school environment. Finally, with the government being a major stakeholder in the education sector, it should devise ways of involving all stakeholders through proper delegation of authority and reviewing structures so that policy implementation can be more people driven.



CHAPTER 6

INTERPRETATION OF THE RESULTS AND SYNTHESIS

6.1 Introduction

The purpose of this chapter is to answer the initial research questions based on the findings discussed in chapters five and four. The experiences of the participants highlighted various thematic areas that this chapter has explored further. The interpretation is based on a literature review and more so the existing theoretical concept guiding policy implementation to depict the existing intersections and commonalities. The synthesis provides a basis upon which the study makes conclusions and recommendations in the next chapter.

6.2 Decision-Making, Awareness, and Cultural Beliefs

6.2.1 Decision-Making

In policy implementation, decision-making is very important since it determines the success of a specific policy. The discussion with the participants revealed how they make decisions to implement policies within their jurisdiction. All 3 principals indicated that all decisions they make concerning the running of their schools are formal and structured. The education officers also indicated that all of the decisions they make are usually well guided and formal following laid-down government structures. This was the same for all teachers in the 3 focus group discussions, who mentioned how they follow a ready-made curriculum to deliver the content in the school.

The observations from the findings show the level at which all principals have managed their institutions by making decisions that are within their scope as per the Ministry of Education requirements. The teachers at the same time were able to make decisions on their classwork as per the curriculum. In all three focus group discussions, the teachers explained their duties and stated how they are able to succeed because of

the decisions they make in dealing with issues related to teaching. This concurs with Hogwood and Gunn's (1984) suggestion that policy decisions are among the most important characteristics of policy implementation, and they can be made by policymakers or street-level bureaucrats. In this case, the study found that most of the decisions made by the teachers and principals were formulated by policymakers.

The study, however, noted that although the teachers and school administrators are able to make decisions regarding the execution of the curriculum and the general running of the schools, they are unable to make decisions regarding learners living with a disability. From the discussions with the participants, it was evident that the teachers and school heads, especially in the normal schools, are not empowered to make decisions regarding the treatment of learners living with disability. It was evident that the decision-making is top down where the decisions are made by an overall authority (Palumbo and Calista, 1990; Younis, 1990; Van and Horn, 1975). In many instances, the teachers and principals in the normal schools were unable to handle the learners living with a disability because the decision structure that they followed did not include these kinds of decisions. A more bottom-up approach would have been more appropriate, as suggested by Howlett (1995), Lipsky (2009), Lipsky (2010), and Hjern and Hull (1981). According to bottom-up approach theorists, grassroots-level decision-making or what they termed street-level bureaucracy is advantageous in policy implementation because the implementers at the lowest level are in touch with the "ground" and understand the specific issues well. Decentralizing authority makes it possible to optimize the decision-making involving social problems and enhances effectiveness in the handling of issues relating to learners living with a disability. Teachers and principals are able to arrest the issues hindering access to education by learners living with disabilities if they are empowered to do so through a bottom-up approach.

Looking at the origin of policies on access to education by learners living with a disability, the Ministry of Education's action of dictating policy decisions on implementers is not strange given that most countries have adopted the idea from global bodies and several declarations, including UNESCO (1990), UNESCO (2008), UNESCO (2010) and UNESCO (2017) which state that education is an internationally-

acknowledged and principal human right and essential for sustainable development irrespective of one's status.

Lipsky (2009) and Lipsky (2010) are of the opinion that street-level bureaucrats should be given the opportunities to make policy decisions since their duties are routine and are self-initiated, and they plan strategies to handle uncertainties and work pressures. The discussions with the education officers revealed strict policy decision frameworks from policymakers. These education officers are required to strictly follow the rules and regulations in supervising teachers and principals and checking the school needs. Elmore (1978) and Meier et al. (2003) have argued that the idea of policy decisions coming from policymakers who may not understand the specific issues at the grassroots level makes policy formulation and implementation ineffective.

6.2.2 Awareness

Barrett (1981) argued that the success of policy implementation depends on compromises among the people within an organization. Barrett cautioned that policy should not be regarded as constant. Instead, it needs to be mediated by actors through mediation and modification. Awareness is a very important denominator in policy implementation. The conversations with the parents of the disabled children about the awareness of special schools revealed that the level of awareness of the existence of special schools in Kenya to support learners living with a disability was extremely low. Only one parent knew that he could take his child to a special school. The discussion with learners living with a disability also revealed that they were not able to get a chance to join a special school because their parents were not aware of the possibility. Most of the learners started in a regular school where the learning environment was completely unbearable for them due to a lack of special facilities, lack of specially-trained teachers, and lack of support from peers and teachers.

From the discussions with the participants, it was evident that the learners living with disability were only able to access special schools through the help of support groups such as the Catholic Church, which continues to play a very pivotal role in the life and education of the learners. It was also evident that without intervention from third parties, the parents were unable to find special schools for their children because they lacked awareness. Out of nine learners who shared their experiences, 5 stated that their parents were not aware, while four said their parents were made aware at a later

stage. Seven out of nine learners that shared their experiences claimed that their education was delayed because their parents were not aware of schools suitable for their disabilities. Some even said that they were not aware that the government gives support to children with disabilities. The issues highlighted from these experiences are in line with a study by Hjern (1982) who observed that policy implementation depends on the relations between several different organizations and emphasized networks as the key to a bottom-up application and advocated for structural formation to be within the pools of establishment.

The Constitution of Kenya, Education Act (2017) Cap 211, requires that a resource center for persons living with disabilities be established in every county. The resource center should serve as a registration center as well as a training facility for special education teachers in their various fields. The resource center also acts as a psychological and educational assessment center for learners living with a disability. Effective implementation of this law can go a long way to enhancing awareness and support for learners living with a disability.

Policies on access to education by learners living with a disability can be effectively implemented if awareness is enhanced and issues to do with discrimination based on race, religion, ethnicity, age, sex, and disability status are addressed. This is what has made countries such as the UK, Canada, Australia, Sweden, and Ireland be more progressive in having children living with a disability in schools (UNESCO, 2015; WHO, 2011; World Bank, 2011; United Nations, 2015; World Bank, 2015). The situation in Middle East and North African (MENA) countries, specifically in Egypt and Jordan, in implementing disability policies involves less emphasis on awareness. This applies to most African countries as well (Bulat, 2017; Anthony, 2009; Ibrahim, 2013; Alothman, 2014; Villenas, 2014; World Bank, 2015; UNESCO, 2015).

Hogwood and Gunn (1984) observed that policy should be implemented based on a grounded theory; cause and effect relations should be direct with minimal intervening links; there should be a single implementing agency with no support from others; proper understanding of objectives; perfect communication and coordination; and obedience to those in authority. His argument also borrows from Hood (1976), who claimed that the only way of solving implementation problems is by instituting perfect administrations.

Awareness is essential in ensuring that learners living with a disability are supported beginning in childhood. Access to quality education without any form of discrimination is a basic human right and therefore children living with a disability deserve quality education like other children. It is evident that lack of awareness stands in the way of ensuring that this is achieved.

6.2.3 Cultural Beliefs

Cultural beliefs can be a serious impediment to co-existence between people in a society. People's beliefs about others can affect policy implementation positively or negatively. My conversation with most of the learners living with a disability revealed that cultural beliefs were a serious problem, especially in their childhood. Being laughed at, humiliated, harassed, discriminated against, and being disowned by parents were commonly mentioned by all of the participants. It was evident that due to cultural beliefs, most people in the community did not want to associate with the participants due to their disability. Others like Moss, who is living with albinism, felt unsafe because the society believes that certain parts of his body are of medicinal value. It also came out that the mothers of 4 out of 9 learners were subjected to harsh treatment because of giving birth to children with a disability. This is very unfortunate given that the government through the constitution and policies gives priority to vulnerable groups or individuals (women, older members of society, persons with disabilities, children, youth, members of minority or marginalized communities, and members of particular ethnic, religious or cultural communities) according to (Republic of Kenya, 2005a), United Nations (2006) and UNESCO (2013) reports.

In the Constitution of Kenya, the Persons with Disabilities Act (2004) forbids the discrimination of persons with disabilities. The law outlines the offenses and penalties that come with this discrimination, and any form of discrimination is punishable by law. The Basic Education Act (2013) also protects learners living with a disability from any form of discrimination. The law also advocates for the acceptance of persons living with a disability by the society.

The findings from the discussions with the participants in this study indicate the presence of a gap in the implementation of the above laws and policies, especially at the grassroots level. Barrett (1981) noted that that policy implementation must depend upon compromises between the people within an organization. Policy implementers can

fully realise the gains of policy if they comprise and accept one another within their cultures. Studies and reports (UNESCO, 2015; Mtuli, 2015; Muiti, 2010; Somerset, 2011; Crosby, 2015) have identified cultural beliefs as a major challenge affecting school-age children given the diverse societies that they come from.

6.3 Curriculum, Environmental Physical Infrastructure, and Teachers' Role

6.3.1 Curriculum

A favourable curriculum was identified by all 17 respondents and the 3 focus groups as a very important element in terms of access to education for learners living with a disability. Out of 9 learners that shared their experiences, none was fully comfortable with the curriculum; 5 were totally uncomfortable. The blind and deaf learners found the curriculum to be very unfavourable for their condition. A learner living with albinism found the curriculum to be fair because he was able to listen to the teachers, read the study books, and ask questions in class, and move from one facility to another with ease. The 3 handicapped learners found the curriculum to be unfavourable. The teachers in focus group discussions had different feelings about the curriculum based on the type of learners they had encountered in class.

The teachers from the St. George School for the Handicapped could not identify the area to modify in the curriculum, while those at the Nico Hauser School for the Visually Impaired felt that some modification was needed to suit their learners. The teachers from the Father Auderaa School for the Deaf felt that serious curriculum modification was needed to suit the deaf learners. Further discussions with the teachers during the focus group discussion indicated that decisions on the curriculum are usually a ministry affair, and that they usually play a minimal role on any changes to the curriculum; that is, their views are hardly incorporated. As suggested by Bardach (1977), it is important for stakeholders (teachers and the Ministry of Education in this case) to work together closely to review the curriculum and to customize it to suit the specific needs of each group of learners living with a disability.

Currently, the Kenyan education system has not implemented any special curriculum for students living with disabilities. However, the Kenya Institute of Curriculum Development (KICD) is in the process of rolling it out (Kenya Institute of

Curriculum Development, 2017). Other countries such as Saudi Arabia, Senegal, Ghana, Ethiopia, Tanzania, and Zimbabwe have implemented a curriculum that uses favourable teaching methodology for learners living with a disability in schools, and also includes sign-language, demonstrations, illustrations, and varied instructional materials as a way of making the curriculum friendly to learners living with a disability (Anthony, 2009; Ibrahim, 2013; Alothman, 2014; Villenas, 2014; World Bank, 2015; UNESCO, 2015; Tichaona, 2013; Mapolisa and Tshabalala, 2013; Musengi and Chireshe 2012; Musengi, 2012; Marcella and Tramontan, 2014; Moyi, 2012; Child Reach, 2016; Mtuli, 2015).

The discussion with the three principals on curriculum matters centred on their role, which they described as well-structured and formal since their work structure was purely administrative and strictly in adherence to the program. The two education officers that I had a conversation with confirmed that their duties on curriculum implementation are well stipulated and structured. It was evident that curriculum formulation and review were done at the top of the education structure while education officers, school principals, and teachers were just executors with little input on the curriculum development. Again, a top-down approach suggested by Palumbo and Calista (1990), Younis (1990) and Van and Horn (1975) was evident.

The idea of having a common curriculum for all learners is a disadvantage to learners living with a disability and acts as an impediment to accessing quality education by these special learners. It is also evident that teachers and school heads that have direct contact with learners living with a disability have minimal involvement in curriculum development or review.

6.3.2 Environmental and Physical Infrastructure

Infrastructure is a key element in any institution of learning; good infrastructure supports learning and enhances the quality of education. For learners living with a disability, having proper infrastructure is critical. From the discussion with the learners in the present study, it was evident that the infrastructure and other facilities were inadequate in all the schools. In some schools, especially regular schools, there were no special facilities or supportive infrastructure to support their needs. This made it very difficult for these learners to survive in school. Also, in the three focus group discussions, the teachers acknowledged that proper infrastructural facilities were very

essential for them to execute their duties. However, they concurred with learners that these facilities are either lacking or are inadequate. Facilities such as paved pathways, ramps, special washrooms, hearing aids, and braille among others were lacking in the regular schools and were inadequate in the special schools.

During my discussions with the school principals on infrastructural facilities, all 3 principals indicated that the infrastructural facilities were inadequate to effectively support special learners. The education officers were careful not to discuss this matter and only stated that their role was to inspect the facilities that were already in existence. Lack of special infrastructure and facilities has been a big problem affecting learners living with a disability across many third-world countries, including Uganda, Tanzania, and Zimbabwe, according to studies (Najjingo, 2009; Moy, 2012 and Muthili, 2010).

These studies also found that learners living with a disability are poorly helped. They cited lack of supportive infrastructural facilities, low teacher-student ratios, and limited resources in special and regular schools as the main impediments to accessing quality education by special learners. A study by DFID (2012) identified the use of existing laws, the collection of adequate data, and the improvisation of environmental infrastructure as the best strategies to enable special learners to access education. Studies (Frankel et al. 2010; Ajodhia, 2010; Franke and Guidero, 2012; Halfon and Friendly, 2013; Fritton, 2009; Geyer et al. 2017 and Alexis et al, 2017) also identified accommodative infrastructural facilities financed by the government and constant research on disabilities as the key success factors for enabling access to education by learners living with a disability.

According to the Kenya Education Act (2017), the national government through the Cabinet Secretary for Education is tasked with ensuring that institutions for special needs be provided with specialized facilities to support learners living with a disability. The findings of this study on infrastructure and facilities therefore point to a gap in the implementation of this law.

6.3.3 Teachers' Role

Teachers play an important role as the key implementers of policies on access to education at the lowest level. All the respondents had something to say about their teachers. All 9 learners noted that most of the support they received in school was from their teachers. All three principals also described teachers as very supportive for the

learners because they are the ones that are in contact with them every day. The education officers indicated that the role of teachers is formal and structured. The teachers also provide information to the education officers that is then used to guide the management of the schools.

According to the education officers, the teachers are the backbone of policy implementation in the schools. This is because they are in direct contact with the learners and have the best understanding of the challenges facing them. The learners also described teachers as their second parents because they try to do everything within their ability to support them. However, the efforts by teachers to support the learners living with a disability are slowed down by factors such as the low number of teachers, lack of facilities, lack of training, and poor remuneration.

This idea of the role of teachers is in agreement with the assertion of Lipsky (2009) and Lipsky (2010), that street-level bureaucrats have routine duties that are self-initiated, and that they plan strategies to handle uncertainties and work under pressures to implement public policy. In this context, the street-level bureaucrats (teachers) are vital pillars whose role in policy formulation, review, and implementation should not be ignored.

6.4 Stakeholders/Government Intervention and Parental support

6.4.1 Stakeholders/Government Intervention

There are many stakeholders in the management of schools. The role of these stakeholders is to support the school to achieve its objectives. These stakeholders are therefore part of policy implementation. From the findings, the government was identified as a major stakeholder in the management of schools and in the handling of learners living with a disability. All of the learners indicated that they received or continued to receive government support. Four learners had received government support since their primary education, while five received government support only when they entered a special secondary school. The parents were also in agreement that the government has been helpful. However, both the learners and parents noted that there were gaps in government support, and that more needed to be done to ensure that the challenges faced by learners living with disability in school be addressed. The

school principals also noted that although the government had been very supportive, there were many challenges that still needed to be addressed, such as facilities, adequacy of teachers, remuneration of teachers, and the curriculum.

According to the findings, it was also evident that other support groups played a key role in enhancing access to education by learners living with disability. All nine learners, the school principals, the education officers, and the parents noted that the Catholic Church had been very instrumental in ensuring that these children had access to an education. The Catholic Church was a major stakeholder in the schools that I visited to conduct the interviews, even though their activities were still controlled by the government. Other support groups identified by the respondents included the Parents Teachers Association (PTA), the Board of Management (BoM), politicians, and human rights groups.

There have been several policy decisions and commissions created by the government in the past to direct policy implementation for learners with disabilities. Republic of Kenya (1964), RoK (1964), RoK (1976), Kamunge (1988), Republic of Kenya (1999) and Kochung (2003) have all advocated for access to education by children living with a disability, the training of teachers, and the establishment of an enabling curriculum. The government has since tried to make the implementation of policy a reality by getting directly involved. The Kenyan government has come up with many other policies to strengthen their management of education activities and more so to support access to education by learners living with a disability (Government of Kenya, 2013; Government of Kenya, 2003; Republic of Kenya, 2001). The constitution of Kenya 2010 articles 53, 54, 55, 56, 57, and 59 also emphasizes the provision of free and compulsory basic education to all children as their basic right, and emphasizes the promotion of Kenyan sign language, braille and other communication formats and technologies accessible to persons with disabilities. Equally, the gender policy provides for increased participation, retention, and completion for learners with special needs and disabilities by providing an enabling environment, a flexible curriculum, trained personnel, and provision of equipment. Despite the existence of all these policies aimed at enhancing access to education by learners living with a disability, the findings from this study suggest that there are still gaps in the level of government intervention and support.

6.4.2 Parental Support

Parental support also emerged as a common theme, especially during my discussions with the nine learners living with a disability. Children with any form of disability require unlimited support from their parents, especially at an early age. Such support can be the provision of basic needs, such as food, clothing, and shelter; moral support or the provision of supportive devices and education.

My discussion with the 9 learners living with a disability on the support they get from their parents revealed that only 4 of them got full parental support, and was from the mother only. It was evident that in most cases, the fathers bow down to pressure from the cultural beliefs of the community and neglect their disabled children. The other five learners did not receive any substantial support from their parents. As a result of the lack of parental support, access to education by the learners was a big challenge. The teachers' views on parental support were interesting. They all had the same answer: "parental support for the learners in school is minimal; they rarely come to school and some have never actually visited the school since they brought their children". The school principals as well as the education officers also noted that parents are less active in the management of the learning process of their children in school. It was noted that most parents do not participate in school activities.

Studies (Giacchino and Kakabadse, 2003; Groce, 2004; Anthony, 2009; Polat, 2011; Ibrahim, 2013; Donohue and Bornman, 2014; Alothman, 2014) identified cultural discrimination, traditional values, a deep sense of spirituality and prejudice towards persons living with a disability, and feeling out of place in the society as the reasons for the non-participation by parents. As outlined by Pressman and Wildavsky (1973), this is a situation where goals and actions have been identified but the actors are unavailable. There are numerous potential benefits of full parental support for learners living with a disability, but this support is lacking.

6.5 Conclusion

In conclusion, it is evident that several gaps exist in the formulation, review, and implementation of policies regarding access to quality education by learners living with a disability. These gaps exist at the grassroots level of decision-making, in policies

on the creation of awareness about support systems for persons living with disabilities, in the implementation of laws that guard against discrimination based on cultural beliefs and other factors, in curriculum development, the provision of supportive infrastructures and facilities, government intervention/support, parental support, and regarding the empowerment of teachers.



CHAPTER 7

SUMMARY OF THE FINDINGS, CONCLUSION, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

7.1 Introduction

This chapter summarizes the findings and provides a conclusion based on the findings. The chapter also discusses the recommendations for policymakers in special education as well as recommendations for further research. While the findings of this study are not generalizable to larger populations, the exceptionality of the experiences and involvement described deliver rich details for those who want to understand the lived experiences of learners living with a disability, their parents, teachers, and education officers in relation to access to education, policy implementation, and strategies. The participants' experiences were expressed in their own words and interpreted within categories and eight emerging themes were highlighted and discussed in chapters 5 and 6. This chapter therefore summarizes the eight themes in relation to the research questions.

7.1.1 Summary of the Findings

The study found that decision-making on issues affecting learners living with a disability is still centralized and only reserved for the top-level decision makers in the education system. Education officers, school heads, and teachers that are at the grass roots level are not empowered to make decisions on matters relating to access to education by learners living with a disability. Decision-making is from the top down. This approach has led to slow decision-making, which has in some instances forced learners to stay away from school for even one year or to live a difficult school life due to lack of special facilities to aid in their learning. Education officers, school heads, and teachers follow strict laid-down policies and procedures without the ability to make any decisions on the unique circumstances that they encounter during their daily routines.

The study also found out that lack of awareness is a major impediment to the access to education by learners living with a disability. Most of the parents of children with a disability are unaware of the existing support structures or the existence of special schools for children living with a disability. A review of the existing laws revealed that programs and policies to enhance awareness about disabilities and to provide easy access to government support are in existence but there is still a gap in their implementation.

The findings from the study also revealed that cultural beliefs and community perception about people living with a disability are a major challenge for children with a disability. Most of the learners were disowned by their parents due to the fear of cultural beliefs harboured by communities about persons with a disability. Children living with a disability experience a very difficult life due to abuse, neglect, harassment, discrimination, and lack of support from their peers and the community in general. As a result, access to education by these learners is greatly affected. Policies and laws developed by the government to guard against discrimination or the mistreatment of persons living with a disability are still not properly implemented, especially at the grassroots level.

The study also found that parental support for learners living with a disability is inadequate. For most of the learners, their parents neglected them once they found out that they had a form of disability. The Catholic Church has played a pivotal role in ensuring that these children access education. While in school, the teachers, principals, and education officers revealed that they get very little support from parents, who are not active in the management of affairs affecting their children in special schools. The responsibility is fully left to the school and the government.

It was also evident that the current curriculum taught in schools is unfavourable for learners living with a disability. Most subjects, especially those that involve symbols, demonstrations, practical illustrations, and a lot of physical activity present a challenge for learners living with a disability. The curriculum is yet to be customized to suit the specific needs of specific forms of disability.

Lack of enough infrastructure and facilities to support learners living with a disability also emerged as a major impediment. In regular schools, the facilities to support special learners are not available at all, while in special schools, the facilities

are inadequate. It was also evident that teachers play a very pivotal role in policy implementation in terms of access to education for special learners. The teachers are in direct contact with the learners every day and clearly understand the challenges they are facing. However, the teachers' roles are formal and structured and they are unable to make quick decisions on the daily circumstances that they encounter during their interaction with learners living with a disability because they are not empowered to do so.

Looking at the stakeholders, the government tends to determine the policy context of disabled learners. The government gives directions to all implementers at different levels and also provides for the required needs to make implementation a success. The government hence decides on the roles of each stakeholder and exercises control over them.

7.1.2 Conclusion

The purpose of this study was to analyze the factors hindering access to education by learners living with a disability in Kenya, in a study of policy implementation and strategies in Siaya and Kisumu counties. I used a phenomenological approach to understand the individual lived experiences in so far as policy implementation for learners living with disability is concerned. Reference was made to theories of policy implementation, namely the top-down, bottom-up, and hybrid approaches from the several studies (Pressman and Wildavsky, 1973; Mazmanian and Sabatier, 1983; Meier and O'Toole, 2003; Hogwood and Gunn, 1984; Hjern and Hull, 1981; Bardach, 1977; Lipsky, 2009; Lipsky, 2010). Eight variables were isolated after the in-depth interviews and were analyzed. The findings revealed that the main factors hindering access to quality education by the learners living with a disability included lack of decision-making ability by stakeholders at the grassroots level (teachers, heads, and county education officers), lack of awareness of existing support structures for learners living with a disability, lack of parental and peer support, negative cultural beliefs and negative perceptions about people living with a disability, lack of sufficient special facilities and infrastructure, and an unfavorable curriculum.

7.1.3 Policy Recommendations

Based on the findings, this study makes the following policy recommendations. Policy makers should consider a bottom-up approach to decisions involving learners living with a disability. A hybrid of the top-down and bottom-up approach can also be considered. This will ensure that the teachers, school heads, and county education officers are empowered to make some decisions at the grassroots level to enhance the efficiency in how matters related to access to education by learners living with a disability is handled.

Policymakers should also consider coming up with policy on research on learners living with a disability in order to continuously be in touch with the real challenges facing these learners, especially at the grassroots level, as well as the emerging issues.

The government should also expedite the implementation of policies and laws on the discrimination of persons living with a disability based on cultural beliefs and other factors. The government should also ensure that schools have sufficient special facilities and supportive infrastructures for learners living with a disability. More specially-trained teachers should also be hired to ensure that schools have a proper teacher-to-learner ratio. Regular schools should also be equipped with facilities and trained teachers to attend to the learners living with a disability that are admitted to regular schools.

The curriculum should also be reviewed and customized to meet the special needs of different types of learners living with a disability in order to ensure that they can access quality education.

The government should also expedite its policies on the creation of awareness about disabilities and on the existing support systems for learners living with a disability.

7.2 Contributions of the Study

The study makes a significant contribution to policymakers in special education because it brings out the gaps in the formulation, review, and implementation of policies related to access to education by learners living with a disability. The study also has highlighted the challenges that learners living with a disability face in their quest for

access to education. The factors hindering this access were clearly explained based on the study findings. These factors will help policymakers develop new policies and strengthen the existing ones in order to ensure that learners living with a disability can access quality education like other children. The study also contributes to the body of knowledge on access to education by learners living with a disability.

7.3 Recommendations for Further Research

The study only considered Siaya and Kisumu counties in Kenya using the phenomenological approach. Further research can be done to expand the scope to more counties or even the whole country in order to understand the factors hindering access to education by learners living with a disability all over the country.

This study can also be replicated using a quantitative approach where the eight variables that emerged from the analysis can be analyzed quantitatively to determine the factor that has the most influence on the success of policy implementation.

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Appendix A: Principals Letter

Name.....

From

Fredrick Ochieng Owuor

Graduate School of Public Administration

National Institute of Development Administration

Bangkapi, Bangkok, 10240

THAILAND

Tel (+66) 966087133, (+254)722813979, (+254)721388287

Email fochiengowuor@gmail.com

Dear, Sir/madam

PhD RESEARCH PROJECT

Am Fredrick Ochieng Owuor, a Kenyan Moi University Lecturer, currently studying a Doctor of Philosophy degree in Development Administration at National Institute of Development Administration in Thailand. Will be doing a phenomenological research on admittance to education in selected special schools in Kenya to establish experiences of learners living with disability, their principals, teachers, parents, and education officers to establish policy implementation and strategies in Kenya context.

Am writing for request to get access to your institution, be part of my respondent, support me get other respondents, and aid me with materials I may need for success of this study. Permission from National commission for Science, Technology and Innovation including others are attached. The nature of the study am carrying out will involve one to one intense interview that is likely to take 90 minutes with breaks in between. I will provide daily record to identified learner respondents in your school, I will certainly require your assistance to select disable learners who will be able to write a reflection of their life history, meaning of that reflection and meaning of that

experience to their life history. Also, in those daily records, I will expect them to write daily experiences for two months. For interview purposes I will require the same learners to participate.

Fredrick Ochieng Owuor



Appendix B: Accord for Volunteer Participation

A request is made you participate in this research because of your support in access to education for learners living with disability and your understanding of government and other stakeholders' involvement special children needs support. I Will value your input since your contribution will make this study succeed. You are requested to read the condition below then confirm your participation;

- Fredrick Ochieng Owuor and research assistant will interview me
- The process will take less than 90 minutes
- I will offer all the required information as per my Knowledge
- I will not object researchers' intention to record the report I provide
- It is within my knowledge that my name will not appear
- I understand the researcher will make a follow up by calling or coming back for more explanation in case of any need.
- Am aware the information I will give shall form part of Owuor Fredrick Ochieng dissertation and may be incorporated into manuscripts submitted to professional journals for publication.
- I have the right to withdraw from the study at any point in time.
- Am free to participate or not to participate without prejudice.

Name (Print): _____

Signature: _____ Date: _____

Area of Resident _____ Phone _____

Fredrick Ochieng Owuor ----- Date-----

Appendix C: Background Data

Name.....

Location.....Address /Tel.....

Sex

Area of origin.....

Age 12 – 15

16- 18

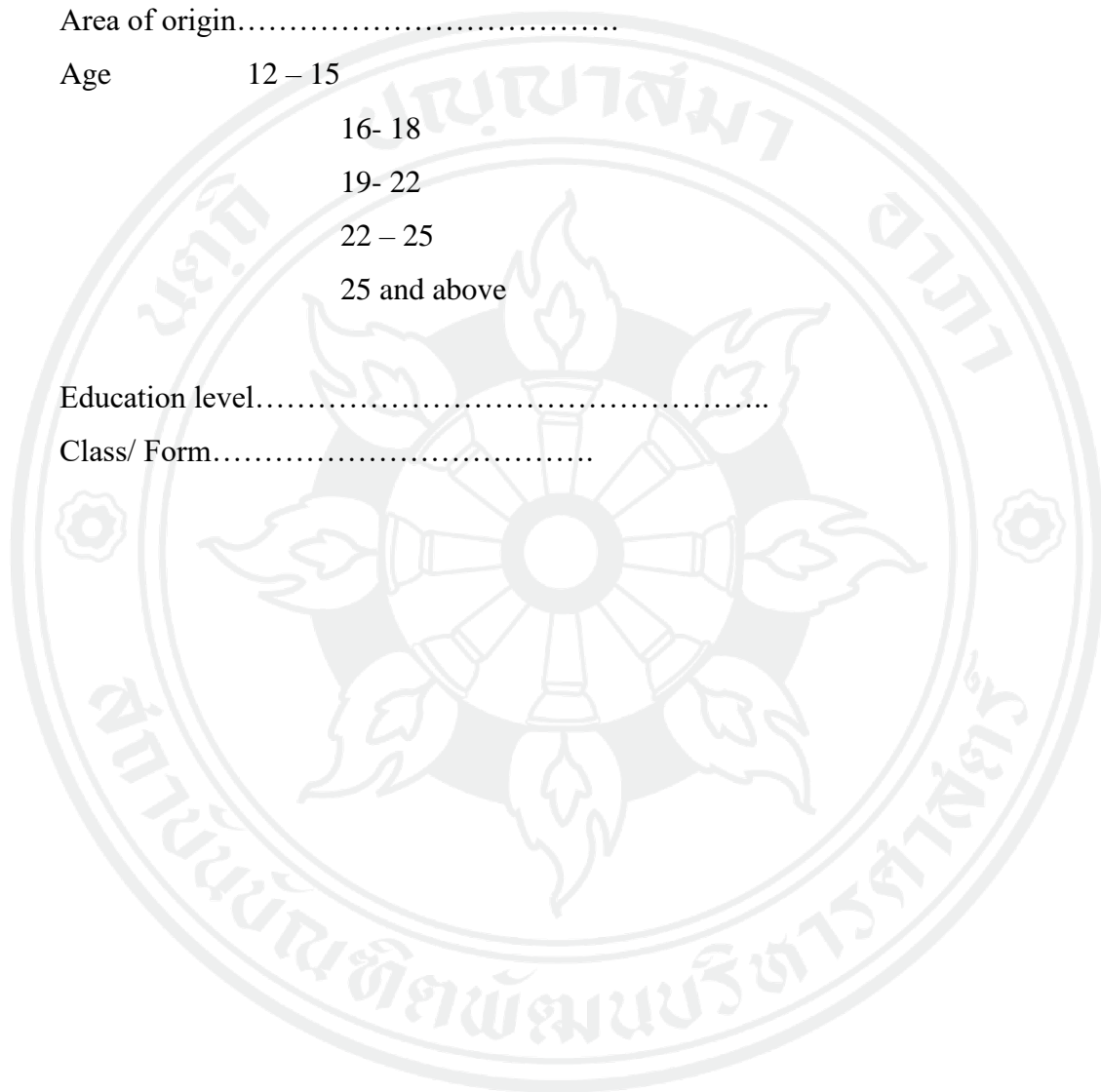
19- 22

22 – 25

25 and above

Education level.....

Class/ Form.....



Appendix D: Interview Protocol for learners living with disabilities

Date.....Place..... Time:

Interviewer's Name.....

1. Respondent No.....
2. Tell me about yourself, what caused your disability, how did you go over accepting yourself?
3. Explain how you heard or saw your parents / family responded to your disability when they became aware of it
4. Discuss how society treated you as a child when you met them
5. Tell me about your first encounter with school environment, how were teachers' reactions towards you? What of fellow learners?
6. Discuss how you find school curriculum, what of school routine? Do you have enough teachers and infrastructure to make you gain from education?
7. How have you facilitated your education financially, have the government/ community given you any personal or group support.
8. What are some of the challenges you find to affect you, how have you tried to overcome them

Appendix E: Interview Protocol for Principals

Date:Place.....Time:

Interviewer's Name.....

1. Respondent No.....
2. Tell me about yourself. (Probe: basic education, secondary, college/ universities and employment stations.)
3. Discuss how you carry out daily routine in the school, are there laid down procedures for managing special schools, how do you relate with your teachers and learners
4. Can you tell me your contribution to policy decision for disability learners?
5. How do you involve parents in school decision making? Are they part of school management structurally?
6. Tell how government through ministry of education is involved in school running, do they give some support? Which one if any
7. How do you judge policies in place as a principal? Are they supportive to your function in moulding disabled learners?
8. Who are your bosses and how do they assess you?

Appendix F: Interview Protocol for Parents

Date:.....Place.....Time:.....

Interviewer's Name.....

1. Respondent No.....
2. Tell me about yourself (Probe: family, education background, occupation etc.)
3. Kindly explain to me how you learnt your child was disable, tell how you managed yourself immediately you learnt of his/her disability?
4. Discuss your child experience with society, and the school environment
5. Explain experiences you underwent while looking for a school for your child
6. Tell the experiences you underwent or undergo in schools your child was (is) learning because of the disability type?
7. What role do you play in school you child learn, what of within the society, do you attend any awareness gathers arranged by government officials, if so, what contribution do you usually make in relation to disabled children?

Appendix G: Interview Protocol for Education Officers

Date:Place.....Time:

Interviewer's Name.....

1. Respondent No.....
2. Tell me about yourself (Probe: role, schools you learnt, including university, how education is perceived in this area etc.)
3. Discuss your responsibility in the office, explain where policy decision for disable learners emanated from, and tell where authority is based?
4. How do you function with other ministries, departments (other stakeholders)?
5. How do you gauge the role of parents in light of existing policy?
6. Are classroom teachers part of policy implementation in ministry cycles? How, and what are their roles
7. what can you say your output/comes are? And how is it determined?
8. What part do government through ministry of education play in policy implementation in special schools?

Appendix H: Focus Group for teachers in special schools

Date:Place.....Time:


School Name.....

1. Let's do a quick round of introductions. Researcher start by introducing himself and his term to create rapport then allow self-introduction. (Name, subject one takes and careers services you have advanced if any, special interest etc.)
2. What are the current population of teachers and learners? (Probe workforce, change in careers, increase in your skill, number of learners increase or decrease per year and reason, something else etc.)
3. What do you know about policy decision regarding your duty as a teacher, where do get ideas of school routine from?
4. How easy or difficult is it to implement the existing given varied disability in school setting? Is the curriculum suiting or it requires some modifications? How are your performance measured by your employer?
5. How often do parents visit their children, do they support school in any way? If yes tell the type of support school require from parents.
6. What is the state of infrastructural facilities, do all learners have personal equipment? what are they.
7. Do you have some bosses controlling your work apart from the principal? If yes how often do they make visit?
8. Let me know some of the challenges you face as a special school teacher in this school

Tell if there are any areas we have not debated while it is essential to this discussion?

(Thanks for your time and support)

Appendix I: Research Permits



No. 0526.02/148

School of Public Administration
National Institute of Development
Administration
Seri-Thai Road, Klong-cha,
Bangkapi, Bangkok 10240,
THAILAND

September 28, 2017

To,
The National Commission for Sciences
Technology and Innovation
9th Floor, Utalii House; Uhuru Highway
P.O Box 30623- 00100
Nairobi- Kenya

Subject: Request for research permit and cooperation.

Dear Sir/Madam,

This is to approve that Mr. Fredrick Ochieng Owuor (Batch-22, ID# 5810131001), is a postgraduate PhD. candidate at the Graduate School of Public Administration (GSPA), National Institute of Development Administration (NIDA), Bangkok, Thailand. Having successfully defended his research proposal on "A PHENOMENOLOGICAL STUDY OF ACCESS TO EDUCATION FOR LEARNERS LIVING WITH DISABILITIES IN KENYA: A STUDY OF POLICY IMPLEMENTATION AND STRATEGIES IN SIAYA AND KISUMU COUNTIES", the incumbent anticipate proceeding to the ground to collect the data from identified institutions and learners. This school humbly request you process a research permit and direct the concerned to cooperate for his data collection.

This university shall highly appreciate any assistance accorded to him.

Yours faithfully,

Pairote P. Nararakul

Assistant Professor Pairote Pathranarakul, Ph.D.
Dean, Graduate School of Public Administration
National Institute of Development Administration



**NATIONAL COMMISSION FOR SCIENCE,
TECHNOLOGY AND INNOVATION**

Telephone: 020 400 7000,
0713 788787, 0735404245
Fax: +254-20-318245, 318249
Email: dg@nacosti.go.ke
Website: www.nacosti.go.ke
When replying please quote

NACOSTI, Upper Kabete
Off Waiyaki Way
P.O. Box 30623-00100
NAIROBI-KENYA

Ref: No. **NACOSTI/P/17/7749/19875**

Date: **3rd November, 2017**

Fredrick Ochieng Owuor
National Institute Of Development Administration
THAILAND.

RE: RESEARCH AUTHORIZATION

Following your application for authority to carry out research on "*A phenomenological study of access to education for learners living with disability in Kenya: A study of policy implementation and strategies in Siaya and Kisumu Counties*" I am pleased to inform you that you have been authorized to undertake research in **Selected Counties** for the period ending **3rd November, 2018.**

You are advised to report to the **County Commissioners and the County Directors of Education, Selected Counties** before embarking on the research project.

Kindly note that, as an applicant who has been licensed under the Science, Technology and Innovation Act, 2013 to conduct research in Kenya, you shall deposit **a copy** of the final research report to the Commission within **one year** of completion. The soft copy of the same should be submitted through the Online Research Information System.

(Signature)

GODFREY P. KALERWA MSc., MBA, MKIM
FOR: DIRECTOR-GENERAL/CEO

Copy to:

The County Commissioners
Selected Counties.

The County Directors of Education
Selected Counties.


THIS IS TO CERTIFY THAT:
MR. FREDRICK OCHIENG OWUOR
 of NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF
 DEVELOPMENT ADMINISTRATION,
 0-30100 ELDORET, has been permitted
 to conduct research in *Kisumu , Siaya*
Counties

**on the topic: A PHENOMENOLOGICAL
 STUDY OF ACCESS TO EDUCATION FOR
 LEARNERS LIVING WITH DISABILITY IN
 KENYA: A STUDY OF POLICY
 IMPLEMENTATION AND STRATEGIES IN
 SIAYA AND KISUMU COUNTIES**

for the period ending:
3rd November, 2018

.....
**Applicant's
 Signature**


Permit No : NACOSTI/P/17/7749/19875
Date Of Issue : 3rd November, 2017
Fee Recieved : Ksh 2000




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

CONDITIONS

1. The License is valid for the proposed research, research site specified period.
2. Both the Licence and any rights thereunder are non-transferable.
3. Upon request of the Commission, the Licensee shall submit a progress report.
4. The Licensee shall report to the County Director of Education and County Governor in the area of research before commencement of the research.
5. Excavation, filming and collection of specimens are subject to further permissions from relevant Government agencies.
6. This Licence does not give authority to transfer research materials.
7. The Licensee shall submit two (2) hard copies and upload a soft copy of their final report.
8. The Commission reserves the right to modify the conditions of this Licence including its cancellation without prior notice.


REPUBLIC OF KENYA


**National Commission for Science,
 Technology and Innovation**

**RESEARCH CLEARANCE
 PERMIT**

Serial No.A 16349

CONDITIONS: see back page

REPUBLIC OF KENYA



THE PRESIDENCY

MINISTRY OF INTERIOR & CO-ORDINATION OF NATIONAL GOVERNMENT

E-Mail cc.siaya@yahoo.com

When replying please quote

COUNTY COMMISSIONER

SIAYA COUNTY

P O Box 83 - 40600

SIAYA

CC/SC/A.31 VOL.II/(47)

5th December, 2017

All Deputy County Commissioners

SIAYA COUNTYRE: RESEARCH AUTHORIZATION – FREDRICK OCHIENG OWUOR

The person referred to above from National Institute of Development Administration, Thailand has been authorized by the Director-General/CEO, National Commission for Science, Technology and Innovation vide letter Ref. No. NACOSTI/P/17/7749/19875 dated 3rd November, 2017 to research on *"A phenomenological study of access to education for learners living with disability in Kenya: A study of policy implementation and strategies,"* for the period ending 3rd November, 2018.

The purpose of this letter therefore is to ask that you accord him the necessary support as he carries out research in your Sub County.


JOSEPHINE A.A. ONUNGA,
COUNTY COMMISSIONER,
SIAYA COUNTY.

Copy to: Fredrick Ochieng Owuor
National Institute of Development Administration
THAILAND

County Director of Education.
SIAYA COUNTY.



REPUBLIC OF KENYA
MINISTRY OF EDUCATION
State Department of Basic Education

COUNTY DIRECTOR OF EDUCATION
 SIAYA COUNTY
 P.O. BOX 564
SIAYA

E-mail: cdesiaya2016@gmail.com

When replying please quote
 SCA.10/VOL.I

Tuesday, December 5, 2017

TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN

RESEARCH AUTHORIZATION: FREDRICK OCHIENG OWUOR

The above named has been mandated to carry out research in Siaya County vide an authorization letter from National Commission for Science and Technology and Innovation Ref. No. NACOSTI/P/17/7749/19875 dated 3RD November, 2017

The research title is "*A phenomenological study of access to education for learners living with disability in Kenya: A study of policy implementation and strategies in Siaya and Kisumu counties*".

Milcah

MILCAH ARUCHO
 FOR: COUNTY DIRECTOR OF EDUCATION
SIAYA COUNTY



OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT
MINISTRY OF INTERIOR AND COORDINATION OF NATIONAL GOVERNMENT

Telephone: Kisumu 2022219/Fax: 2022219
 Email: ckisumucounty@gmail.com

COUNTY COMMISSIONER
KISUMU COUNTY
P.O. BOX 1912-40100
KISUMU

CC/KC/RES/1/2/Vol.II

4th December, 2017


All Deputy County Commissioners
KISUMU COUNTY

RESEARCH AUTHORITY – FREDRICK OCHIENG OWUOR

Reference is made to a letter from NACOSTI ref: NACOSTI/P/17/7749/19875 dated 3rd November 2017 on the above subject matter.

The above named is from National Institute of Development Administration and has been authorized to carry out a research on *"A phenomenological study of access to education for learners living with disability in Kenya: A study of policy implementation and strategies in Kisumu County"*. The research ends on 3rd November, 2018.

Kindly accord him any assistance that he may need.


JOHN MURIUKI
For: COUNTY COMMISSIONER
KISUMU COUNTY

Copy to:

Fredrick Ochieng Owuor
 National Institute of Development Administration
THAILAND

MINISTRY OF EDUCATION
State Department of Basic Education

Telegrams: "schooling", Kisumu
 Telephone: Kisumu 057 - 2024599
 Email: Ckisumu@education.go.ke



COUNTY DIRECTOR OF EDUCATION
 KISUMU COUNTY
 PROVINCIAL HEADQUARTERS NYANZA
 3RD FLOOR
 P.O BOX 575 - 40100
 KISUMU

When replying please quote

CDE/KSM/GA/19/3A/VOL.II/150

3rd December, 2017

TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN

**RE: RESEARCH AUTHORIZATION
 FREDRICK OCHIENG OWUOR
 PERMIT NO.NACOSTI/P/17/7749/19875**

The above named is a student at National Institute of Development Administration.

This is to certify that he has been granted authority to carry out research on "*A phenomenological study of access to education for learners living with disability in Kenya: A study of policy implementation and strategies in Siaya and Kisumu Counties,*" for a period ending 3rd November, 2018.

Any assistance accorded to him to accomplish the assignment will be highly appreciated.

EUNICE A. OUKE
 For: COUNTY DIRECTOR OF EDUCATION
 KISUMU COUNTY

BIOGRAPHY

NAME	Fredrick Ochieng Owuor
ACADEMIC BACKGROUND	Master of Art in project planning and management. UoN – Kenya (2009) Postgraduate Diploma (PPM) UoN – Kenya (2007) Master of Education M.ED. KU - Kenya (2005) Bachelor of Educations Arts B. ED, KU- Kenya (2002)
EXPERIENCES	Lecturing; Research; Training; project Evaluation; Project Implementation; Project Assessments.

