

Examining Visual Impairment Challenges on Special Needs Pupils' Academic Achievement in Bukoba District, Tanzania

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DOI: [10.36348/jaep.2022.v06i07.006](https://doi.org/10.36348/jaep.2022.v06i07.006)

| Received: 05.06.2022 | Accepted: 11.07.2022 | Published: 22.07.2022

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Abstract

The main purpose of this study was to examine the challenges facing visually impaired pupils on academic achievement in special needs primary schools in Bukoba District, Tanzania. The study was guided by a specific objective: to examine visual impairment challenges facing special needs pupils' academic achievement in Bukoba District. The study was anchored on Maslow's theory of needs. The study employed a survey research design. The target population was 791 respondents that involved 53 teachers, 735 visually impaired pupils, 2 Head teachers, and 1 DEO. The sample size was 39 teachers, 47 visually impaired pupils, 2 Head of schools and 1 District Educational Officer. The researcher used questionnaires and interviews guides as the tools for research data collection. The study found 92.3 percent agreed by saying that there were some challenges facing visually impaired pupils on academic achievement while few respondents equal to 7.7 percent respondents responded by saying there are no challenges facing visually impaired pupils in special needs primary schools in Bukoba district. Finally, the study recommends that the government should put much effort on supporting visually impaired pupils through financial support as well as allowing more teachers to go for further training, besides providing relevant teaching and learning resources. Ethical considerations were adhered to including seeking consent of the respondents and guarding against plagiarism.

Keywords: Visual Impairment challenge Pupils Academic Achievement Tanzania.

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INTRODUCTION

Visually impaired refers to the people with vision loss that constitutes a significant limitation to perform the task that requires sight. The work of Nannemann (2019) who dealt with self-accommodation strategy for students with visually impairments reiterated that visually impaired is a kind of vision loss that may be to a person who cannot see at all or the one who has partial vision loss. The history of special education to children with disabilities especially visually impaired pupils can be traced back to about 50 years ago. Most states have various legislation which guides education to disabled children. Furthermore, in early 1970s most of the countries such as USA, Britain and Germany started to impose legislations on special needs education and these legislations came to existence as a result of tough advocacy battle that were led by civil societies mainly comprising of parents to children with disabilities (UNESCO, 2001). Similarly, the first advocacy groups were formed in 1930s and around 1950s different states were lobbying for

education to children with disabilities and most of the teachers were posted for training around 1960s (UNESCO, 2001).

In USA a court decision around 1970s was formed giving the state the responsibility of providing facilities and educational resources to children with disabilities specifically visually impaired children. Other countries such Britain, France and Germany also responded in 1990s by imposing the legislation. All of these states aimed at ensuring that children with impairments especially visually impaired children did not get only a just education but the quality education compared to other groups of the people. According to Carmen (2014) due to the legislations imposed by 1990s in various countries on access to education lead on creating different agreements and education policies that still aimed to increase the education opportunity to children with impairments especially visually impaired children.

There are many agreements and movements in education policies which are aiming to provide education opportunity to all groups including learners with special needs or disabilities so as to accommodate them (UNESCO, 2017). The 1990s agreements were: Sustainable Development Goals, Millennium Development Goals, Education for All, Convention of Rights of Children and Universal Declaration of Human Rights. The changes made through those agreements were set to increase educational opportunities, participation and learning for all children who were visually impaired. In fact, the agreements and movements in education policies may lead on quality education as the core item towards achievement of sustainable development in all spheres and that was to be followed by all UN member states (UNESCO, 2017). In spite, of the struggles from the international agreements and educational policies insisting on provision of equal access of education, still a gap among children with visual impairment need much attention (Stewart 2014). The efforts have been made towards visually impaired pupils to ensure that, they are in a position to achieve better in their studies. Through these efforts, for instance, favorable education policies may prepare visually impaired pupils to contribute in sustainable development like other groups of people.

In South America, specifically Brazil through the Ministry of Education, special programs have been launched in order to promote inclusion education, such programmes including the right to diversity and the continuous formation programme for teachers for special needs. Other programmes in Brazil are Implementation Programme of Multifunctional Resource Classrooms and the Regulation for People with Disabilities (Cristovao *et al*, 2017). Hence, these efforts may provide the opportunity to children or people with disabilities to get the access to education particularly visually impaired pupils.

Similarly, India responded by introducing the national policies to generate inclusive education for the people with disabilities. For instance, The Right of Children for Free and Compulsory Education through its constitution amendment number 21A which was passed in 2009 (Aruna S *et al*, 2016). The act 21A further reformed the Scheme of Integrated Education for Disabled Children (IEDC) and created the Inclusive Education of the Disabled at Secondary Stage (IEDSS). The objective of IEDSS was to enable children with disabilities to continue with their education at the secondary stage. Therefore, these policies could enable impaired children to realize their dreams in educational achievements.

Basing on Salamanca conference agreements which was held in Spain 1994 emphasize provision of equal access of education to all; African countries are also associated to such international agreements and movement concerning children with visual impairments

(Nydal, 2008). Similarly, most of the African governments are committed to inclusive education that emphasizes equal access of education to all groups. As a matter of fact, Pekeberg (2012) asserts that in Ghana, inclusive education was introduced in 1990s led by the Education for All (EFA) as suggested in Salamanca agenda. In addition to that, the introduction of inclusive education policy of 2013 in Ghana reveals other previous strategies such as Ghana Shared Growth and Development Agenda (GSGDA), Education Strategic Plan (2010-2020) and the Disability Act (Republic of Ghana, 2013) that ensured continuation of creating good environment of teaching and learning to visually impaired children. Other African countries such as Cameroon, Algeria and Kenya managed to follow the global movement and policies concerning children with visual impairments (Odoyo *et al*, 2015). Hence, according to (Achiyo *et al*, 2020) all African strategies and policies could prepare children with visual impairments to get access in education and increase the number of enrolments in different levels of education.

Tanzania is among developing nations that is estimated to have a total number of 3,450,986 which is equal to 9.3 percent of the people with disabilities where by 661,071 which is equal to 1.94 percent, are people who are visually impaired that results to a large group of people compared with other disabilities in the country ((Nasiforo, 2015, URT, 2018). Although, global education has shown significant changes over time, people with disability are still excluded from the five rights to education. Previously visually impaired children who managed to access education, were given a chance in special schools that were designed according to types of disabilities and gender (Tungaraza, 2010). Also, Tanzania like other members of the international agreements, has made great efforts towards the attainment of equal educational goals by formulating related policies and enacting laws for instance; Education for Self-Reliance (ESR) (1967), Universal Primary Education (UPE) (1977) and the Education Act of 1978, which link with international policies that aimed at providing equal access of education to all groups including children with Visual Impairments (Mwakyeya, 2013).

Based on the study, the Special Needs Education was developed and supported by efforts of non-governmental organizations (NGOs) in Tanzania. The first schools for children with disabilities in Tanzania were opened by religious organizations such as the Anglican Church which established the first school for students with blindness (boys) in 1950s and the Roman Catholic Church established the first school for deaf children in 1963 (Mushi, 2011). This was also done in Bukoba District to assist those visually impaired pupils to get the access of primary education in those special needs' primary schools. The government has amended the legislations and policies that indicate a commitment towards advancing the

rights of pupils with disabilities. These include the 1977 Constitution and its amendments, which according to (Rodriguez *et al*, 2015) recognizes the rights of persons with disabilities and prohibit all forms of discrimination. In 2010, the Disability Act No. 9 was launched in Tanzania Mainland. Among the issues covered in the Act include work protection and promotion of the basic rights of persons with disabilities. Similarly, Bukoba District has many visually impaired pupils and the special needs primary schools. Most of those special needs primary schools throughout the region are in Bukoba District. Despite the efforts done by both government and stakeholders the transition of visually impaired pupils from primary level to secondary is still low. Therefore, the study aimed to assess the challenges facing visually impaired pupils towards academic achievement in special needs primary schools in Bukoba District.

Statement of the Problem

Education is important to every individual. The Universal declaration of human rights of 1948 states that, "All people have the rights to education, work, health and wellbeing" (Grell, 2018). Despite government effort to help the visually impaired students, the government of Tanzania still records low primary education to secondary transition. Therefore, this study assessed the challenges facing visually impaired pupils on academic achievement in special needs primary schools in Bukoba District.

Challenges Facing Visually Impaired Pupils on Academic Achievement

Pupils with visual impairment are facing various challenges on the process of ensuring they achieve in academics. Temesgen (2018) conducted a study on the challenges that learners who are visually impaired are facing in primary schools of Weldeya town in Ethiopia. In the study principals, learners with visual impairment and teachers were invited. Phenomenological design was used to investigate the experiences of participants regarding to the challenges facing the learners who are visually impaired. The researcher used a semi structured interview, focused group discussion and observation check list to gather data. The findings showed that inflexibility of financial guideline in schools and lack of training among teachers were identified as major challenges for academic achievement to visually impaired learners. On more financial matters, the works of (Lugome, 2018); (Nyanda *et al*, 2018) who dealt with financial challenges facing Non-Governmental organizations' in promotion of education in Musoma District, Tanzania postulated the government should increase the education funds to cater for rising cases student with learning challenges. However, the researcher did not provide solution for facilities and management challenges to visually impaired pupils and also, the researcher did not suggest effective measures that can be taken to solve those challenges for improving

academic achievement to visually impaired pupils. The current study filled this gap.

In the same manner, Morelle (2016) did a study on the challenges experienced by the learners with visual impairment in primary schools at Kenneth Kaunda District in South Africa. The study results showed that visually impaired learners faced three challenges which are inadequate teaching skills on visually impaired learners, inadequate teaching and learning resources as well as inactive involvement of parents in visually impaired learner's activities. The study approach was pure qualitative which hindered the respondents to provide the exact statistics information towards aspects and challenges facing visually impaired learners. However, the researcher did not provide solutions to management challenges concerning visually impaired learners and did not suggest the possible measures on solving challenges that are facing them.

Furthermore, research by (Nyagiati *et al*, 2018); (Wilson, 2016) conducted a study on assessment of school challenges facing children with visual impairment in accessing primary education in Ilala Municipality Dar es salaam. The study adopted the descriptive design in order to describe the characteristics of particular individual or group that provided information on the challenges facing children with visual impairments. The finding showed that limited special treatment in terms of supportive facilities to the disabled pupils hindered them in acquiring education. Also, the study emphasized on the appropriate use of machines (Braille) which is necessary in helping pupils with visual disabilities on acquiring primary education. Apart from the challenges related to school facilities and learning materials like Brailles which were insisted in this study, other challenges that may hinder visually impaired pupils in their academic achievement include limited cooperation and teaching morale among teachers in taking care of pupils with visual impairments and some parents hide them from schools (Omollo *et al*, 2017). Therefore, in order to ensure visually impaired learners are able to excel in their academics, putting challenges into consideration may reduce obstacles in the learning process, hence academic achievement (Achiyo *et al*, 2020).

In addition, (Mutia, 2020) conducted a study on the challenges in teaching visually impaired students in Kenya. The main objectives of the study was to investigate the obstacles encountered by visually impaired students and teachers in teaching and learning process. The study employed mixed research approach. The findings revealed that despite of teachers having the ability towards their subjects of specialization, handling the learners with visual impairment was difficult that limited the learners in their academic achievement.

Finally, the work of (Kiomoka, 2014) in his study on challenges which children with visual impairments face in learning in primary schools, used qualitative approach and case study design which specifically aimed at examining how learning environment affects learners with visual impairments and to explore the social interaction of learners with visual impairments in learning at school. Purposive sampling was adopted and one school was selected from one municipality in Tanzania. The data were collected through semi structured interview and observation. The study involved 15 learners with visual impairment, 10 sighted learners and 6 teachers. The findings revealed that there were insufficient teaching and learning resources, shortage of teachers and unfavorable physical environment. The findings further showed that there was limited cooperation among teachers themselves and parents. Based on the findings the researcher recommends that there is a need for the Ministry of Education, Science and Technology (MoEST) and different stakeholders to collaborate by showing their commitment in provision of educational resources to visually impaired learners and making sure that there is flexible curriculum that meet the needs of each learner with visual impairment.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Research Approach

This study employed mixed research approach in collecting, analysing data and interpreting the results. Mixed research approach involves collection of both qualitative and quantitative data in one study (Creswell, 2014). The mixed research approach helped the researcher to obtain the strength of both approaches in order to minimize the limitation of using one approach for the purpose of providing a comprehensive understanding of the research problem in a single study.

Research Design

A research design refers to the arrangement of condition and analysis of the data in the manner that aim to combine the relevance for the research purpose. According to (Kothari, 2014) Research design is the conceptual structure which the research conducted and constitutes the blue print for collection, measurement and analysis of the data. This study employed convergent parallel research design. According to (Creswell, 2014) Convergent parallel research design is the form of the mixed methods design in which the researcher collects both forms of data at roughly the same time and then integrates the information in the interpretation of the overall results. Therefore, in this

study the researcher collected both quantitative and qualitative data at the same time in order to provide the better understanding on the existing problem.

Area of Study

This study was conducted in Bukoba District which is on the lake zone part of Tanzania in Kagera region. According to (Nyagiati *et al*, 2018) it is one of the District councils among the eight District which are; Biharamulo District, Bukoba rural District, Karagwe District, Kywerwa District, Missenyi District, Muleba District and Ngara District that are found in Kagera region. There are many special needs pupils especially visually impaired pupils and in the whole region there are only two special needs primary schools and all those schools are found in Bukoba Districts. Therefore, the researcher decided to select Bukoba District as the area of study due the availability of special needs primary schools and it was easier for the researcher to collect the data from the selected area of the study.

Target Population

Population is the group of components such as individuals, objects, or items from which sample is taken. Furthermore, (Gay *et al*, 2012) describe population as a group of items or people whereby a researcher wishes to explore facts. Therefore, Population is an aggregate number of people, objects, items or thing that a researcher has in mind from which one can obtain information and draw a conclusion. The target population was 791 respondents that involved 53 teachers, 735 visually impaired pupils, 2 Head teachers, and 1 DEO.

Sampling Procedure

Sampling procedure is the techniques which the researcher used to gather sample size (Mugenda *et al*, 2012). Research used simple random sampling, stratified sampling, and purposive sampling, since are procedures, which helped the researcher to get an accurate sample size.

Simple random sampling refers as the method of sample selection, which gives each element an equal chance of being included in the sample (Kothari, 2014). Simple random sampling technique was used to obtain the sample of pupils with visual impairment and primary school teachers. Both teachers and pupils with visual impairment were provided with pieces of paper labelled 1 and 2. The pieces of papers were in the same box. Randomly papers labelled number 2 indicated the participants to be involved in the study.

Table 3.1 Sampling of Teachers and Students

Description	Population	Sample	Technique		
Schools	Students	Teachers	Students	Teachers	
School A	369	28	24	21	Simple random
School B	366	25	23	18	Simple random
TOTAL	735	53	47	39	

Source: Researcher (2021)

Creswell (2012) defines stratified sampling technique as the techniques in which researchers divide the population according to some specific characteristics and then using simple random sampling to sample from each subgroup of the population. This study used stratified sampling technique to stratify teachers and pupils based on their gender to avoid biasness. The researcher also purposively used two special needs primary schools.

On the other hand, London Council (2015); Patton (2015) defines purposive sampling technique as the deliberately selecting sample units that conform to some predetermined criteria in a study population. This study used purposive sampling techniques in sampling Head of school in schools with visually impaired pupils and the DEO because of their position.

Sample Size and Sampling Procedures

Sample size refers to the number of items to be selected from the universe to constitute a sample (Kothari, 2014). However, to identify the sample size for this study, researcher used the Yamane formula.

$$n = \frac{N}{1 + N(e)^2}$$

Where

N = Target population

n = Sample size

e = Level of precision = 0.1

From the formula

$$n = \frac{N}{1 + N(e)^2}$$

N = 791, n=? e = 0.1

Substituting values in the formula

$$n = \frac{N}{1 + (e)^2}$$

$$n = \frac{791}{1 + 791(0.1)^2}$$

$$n = \frac{791}{1 + 788(0.01)}$$

$$n = \frac{791}{1 + 7.9}$$

$$n = \frac{791}{8.9}$$

∴ n=89

Therefore, the sample size for this study included 89 participants as indicated in Table 3.1

Table 3.1 Target Population and Sample Size Matrix

Category techniques	Target population	Sample size	Sampling
Teachers sampling	53	39	Simple and stratified sampling
Pupils with visually impaired	735	47	Simple and stratified sampling
Head of schools	2	2	Purposive sampling
DEO	1	1	Purposive sampling
Total	791	89	

Source: Researcher (2021)

Data Collection Instruments

Research instruments are measurement tools designed to obtain data on the topic interest from research subject (Patton 2015). Research tools or instrument in this study were questionnaires and interviews.

Questionnaires

This study used both open ended and closed-ended questionnaire in collecting information from teachers in two selected schools. (Kombo *et al*, 2006) defines questionnaire as the research instrument that gathers data over a large sample. (Gilham, 2009) argued that questionnaire is the list of questions, which need answers from the respondents. This study used questionnaire in collecting information from teachers since this method collects information easily in the large area for short time.

Interview

This study used semi-structured interview methods to collect information from the key informants, namely the DEO, head of schools and visually impaired pupils. Salmon (2010) defines interview as the specific

form of conversation where by knowledge is produced through the interaction. Therefore, an interview is the questions asked orally and categorized into various forms such as semi-structured, structured and unstructured interviews between an interviewer and interviewee. This study employed interview method to heads of the schools and the District Education Officer because it gave participants freedom to answer the questions using their own opinions, perceptions, pictures and ideas to produce the relevance and reliable information concerned in the study problem. In addition, interview guides were used to visually impaired pupils in order to provide a chance to them to express their ideas. Therefore, in this study the researcher used both unstructured and structured interviews to explore first-hand information from the respondents.

Piloting, Validity and Reliability of the Research Instrument

Piloting of Research Instrument

Cohen *et al*, (2007) define piloting of the study is a small study conducted in advance of planned research specifically to test a research instrument and

allow the adjustment before the final commitment of the research. The researcher conducted a pilot study at one of the special need's primary school; participants involved in pilot study were not included in the actual data collection. In this study, the researcher went once in the field by dividing the teachers into two groups using split half method. Moreover, the researcher divided the questions from the questionnaires into two parts by using odd and even numbers. Then the questions that fall under even numbers were given to respondents of group number one while the other questions that fall under even numbers were given to respondents of group number two. Finally, the researcher correlated the results of scores from both groups to check the correlation and consistence of the research instrument.

Validity of Research Instrument

The work of Ngussa (2017) describes validity as the way of justifying the appropriateness of instrument utilized by the researcher in the study. Creswell (2014) defines validity as particular steps used by the researcher to check for the accuracy of the research findings. Therefore, validity is the magnitude to which the instrument measures what is supposed to measure. In this study the researcher validated the research instruments using content validity for quantitative data and triangulation validity for qualitative data.

Content Validity

Content Validity is a measure of the degree to which data collected using a particular instrument represents a specific domain of indicator or content of a particular concepts (Mugenda *et al*, 2003). Therefore, in assessing the content validity always involve the experts or professionals in the particular field. In this study the content validity tested through careful preparation of research instruments and was checked by the supervisor for the purpose ensuring the consistency of the research instruments and the relevance of data collected.

Triangulation Validity

According to Yin (2009) triangulation validity is the process of using multiple sources of the evidences to provide the multiple measures of the same phenomena. In other words, triangulation validity means using of more than one method to collect the data on the same topic. Due to the existence of various types of triangulation validity, in this study the researcher validated the qualitative data with methodological triangulation by employing different methods such as interview and open-ended questionnaires in order to establish the credibility of the research instruments.

Reliability of Instruments

Reliability is the measure of the degree to which a research instrument yields consistent of the

results or data after repeated trials (Mugenda *et al*, 2003). Therefore, reliability is the stability and consistency of score from the instrument. The researcher used the split-half technique to test the reliability of the data in which one testing session involved in such way, there were two parts where by the subjects' scores from one part will be correlated with scores from the second part. (Mugenda *et al*, 2003) states that, the coefficient of 0.80 or more suggested that there is a high degree of the reliability of the data. Therefore, the questionnaires were answered by 82 percent that means the research instruments were consistent and accurate for continuing with data collection.

Data Collection Procedures

The researcher visited the heads of schools and arranged the date for data collection. Finally, the researcher collected data from the required respondents by using questionnaires which were admitted to the teachers then soon after filling the questionnaire interview guide followed to the heads of schools, pupils and DEO.

Data Analysis Procedures

The study employed both quantitative and qualitative approaches in recording and analysing the findings from the study area. Patton (2015) defines data analysis as the process of cleaning, transforming, and modelling data to discover useful information for decision-making. Quantitative data was collected using questionnaire and analysed through descriptive statistics using Statistical Package for Social Science (SPSS) version 20. Also, the quantitative data was analysed and presented using frequencies, tables, and percentages for easier communication of data to the users. Qualitative data collected using interviews and open-ended questionnaires was analysed thematically through themes as well as patterns and later discussed through description to make sense of the findings.

Ethical Considerations

Ethical considerations are the issues or aspects that the researcher needs to be aware of it, before conducting the study (Judith, 2010). The researcher followed all research principles by obtaining clearance permit from the vice chancellor at SAUT, which allowed him to obtain another permit from RAS and DAS to schools. The researcher ensured the ethical considerations in the study through observing confidentiality when collecting the information from participants that was to be used for academic purposes only as prescribed in the study. Honesty was another ethical issue that the researcher considered by ensuring the participants have to sincerely provide relevant information based on their understanding without copying from each other and participants were protected from both physical and psychological harm by not using language that pitches the participants. Finally, the researcher acknowledged all sources used in

the study and comply with the American Psychological Association (APA).

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSIONS

Challenges Facing Visually Impaired Pupils on Academic Achievement

In the first specific objective of this study the researcher intended to find out the challenges facing visually impaired pupils on academic achievement in Bukoba District. In this case, the researcher started by asking the respondents to tell if there were some challenges facing visually impaired pupils on academic achievement. The respondents were asked to say “Yes” or “No”. The results were presented in table 4.3

Table 4.1 Responses on the Teaching Learning Resources Challenges Facing Visually Impaired Pupils on Academic Achievement

Respondents Response	Frequency	Percent
Yes	36	92.3
No	3	7.7
Total	39	100.0

Source: field data (2021)

The findings from table 4.3 show that most of the respondents equal to 92.3 percent agreed by saying that there were some challenges facing visually impaired pupils on academic achievement while few respondents equal to 7.7 percent respondents responded by saying there are no challenges facing visually impaired pupils in special needs primary schools in Bukoba district. In the same line, the study results were supported by conceptual framework of the study that described the various challenges facing visually impaired pupils as the independent variables; this was

supported by Sager (2008) who opined that challenges facing visually impaired pupils on academic achievement are not few. This implies that most of the respondents agree with the statement that various challenges are facing visually impaired pupils on academic achievement.

Similarly, the results were supported by (Morelle, 2016) who argued that visually impaired learners are faced with three major challenges which were; inadequate teaching skills on visually impaired learners, inadequate teaching and learning resources as well as inactive involvement of parents in visually impaired learner’s activities. Also, Maslow’s theory developed by (Abraham, 1940) corresponds with results by stating that people with disabilities are facing various challenges, so they need to be protected from danger and make them to feel that they are secured. Based on the study, this implies that when the visually impaired pupils are in school, they need to be protected from danger in order to feel that they are respected and secured. In the same line, (Santrock, 2011) through Maslow’s theory states that the emphasis of safety needs is to ensure the survival of people by providing them protection from danger and crime.

Furthermore, the respondents were asked to mention and briefly explain the challenges facing visually impaired pupils on academic achievement. Those who responded ‘yes’ were able to mention and briefly explain the challenges facing visually impaired pupils on academic achievement that are found in Bukoba District in special needs primary schools as indicated in table 4.5.

Table 4.2 Other Challenges Facing Visually Impaired Pupils on Academic Achievement

Respondents’ responses	Frequency	Percent
Inadequate teaching morale	9	23.7
Shortage of trained teachers	9	23.7
Financial constraints	7	18.4
Shortage of infrastructures	5	13.2
Inadequate parental involvement	3	7.9
Inadequate community support	2	5.3
Poor education support	2	5.1
Inadequate motivation to teachers	2	5.1
Total	39	100

Source: field data (2021)

The respondents were required to list and briefly explain the challenges facing visually impaired pupils on academic achievement. The findings as indicated in table 4.4 summarized various challenges facing visually impaired pupils and are explained

Inadequate Teaching Morale

Table 4.4 indicated that 9 respondents equal to 23.7 percent responded that inadequate teaching morale is one of the challenges facing the visually impaired

pupils in their academics. The findings were also supported by an interview with the head of school who also mentioned inadequate teaching morale as one among challenges that hinder the academic achievement of visually impaired pupils and he said that:

For sure teaching morale among teachers in performing their duties is still a problem and one among the reason that causing difficulties to visually impaired pupils in the learning environment. In this manner,

some efforts need to be taken in ensuring teaching morale among teachers increase for the effective performance of their duties. Also, there are some aspects in this school which justify that there is inadequate teaching morale among the teachers. For instance, some teachers always being late in entering in the classroom for the lesson and for those who try to be always early in their class for lesson, they do not have more time after class to continue guiding and teaching the pupils (Head of school A, September, 2021).

Also, the Educational Officer regarding teachers teaching morale argued that most of the teachers lose teaching morale due to the nature of the teaching and learning environment. During the interview session the interviewee said:

The situation is worse; some of the teachers are not playing their duty effectively, instead spending most of their time blaming the government that is responsible for visually impaired pupils. The government is responsible for some of the issues and also the teachers need to increase working morale themselves to reduce some challenges that are hindering visually impaired pupils (DEO September, 2021).

Furthermore, the finding corresponds with Wilson (2016) who argued that limited cooperation and teaching morale among teachers in taking care of pupils with visual impairment hinder them to achieve in academics. Hence insisted that visually impaired learners may be able to excel in their academics by putting challenges facing teachers into consideration which may increase teaching morale among the teachers. Based on the study results, it implies that in Bukoba District some of the teachers, the working morale is limited that lead to difficulties for visually impaired pupils in the learning process.

Shortage of Trained Teachers with Special Education

Table 4.4 showed that 23.7 percent of the respondents argued that shortage of trained teachers was viewed as one of the challenges facing visually impaired pupils on academic achievement. The finding also was supported by the head of school B, who noted that

In the school, there are only three teachers out of eighteen teachers who are trained and able to use Braille machines in teaching visually impaired pupils. Also, this situation makes teaching and learning activities to be hard not only to teachers but even pupils especially the time when they want help from their teachers but due to the shortage of trained teachers on using resources on teaching it becomes a challenge. In this context, to ensure academic achievement of visually impaired pupils the government needs to invest on training more teachers to increase the skilled

teachers on using teaching and learning resources for visually impaired (Head of school B, September, 2021).

Likewise, through the interview, the DEO states that

Trained teachers who teach visually impaired pupils are much needed to foster the teaching and learning activities. In the world of science and technology things changes every day, so I know trained teachers are much needed. Although we are still facing some challenges on getting more trained teachers for pupils with disabilities but we continue to make more efforts to ensure, the government is training more teachers (DEO, September, 2021).

Similarly, Head of school A, through interview commented that in our school, the number of trained teachers who are able to use teaching and learning resources is still low. Currently, some efforts have been made, to ensure teachers can match the number of pupils available. As a school, we make various efforts for instance we use few teachers we have effectively and also asking more teachers to be employed in our school. My opinion to ensure visually impaired pupils achieve in academics is better to increase number of trained teachers especially who are able to use teaching and learning resources (Head of school A, September, 2021).

These results demonstrated that the specialized teachers who can assist the visually impaired pupils is still a big question that needs to be answered and the right way is to think of the strategic effective plans of investing on teachers training.

Furthermore, (Mutia, 2020) supported the study finding by stating that a shortage of trained teachers leads to insufficient knowledge among teachers in teaching visually impaired pupils that hinder pupils with visual impairments to achieve in academics.

Finally, (Temesgen, 2018) supports this study by showing that lack of enough training among the teachers was identified as the major challenge facing visually impaired pupils on academic achievements. Therefore, this implies that there is a shortage of trained teachers in special needs primary schools in Bukoba District and majority of respondents argued that in order to ensure visually impaired pupils achieve in academic, government need also to investing much on training teachers on using teaching and learning resources such as braille machines and other important resources that assist visually impaired pupils.

Financial Constraints in Supporting Visually Impaired Pupils

The study results showed that 18.4 percent of respondents responded that financial constraint was another challenge facing visually impaired pupils on academic achievement. Financial is a driving force in various aspects. The shortage of finance in any sector

specifically in the education field is a big problem. Similarly, the study results were supported by an interview with the head of school B, who pointed out financial constraint as one of the challenges facing visually impaired pupils on academic achievement. Through the interview session the Head of School B said:

Financial is highly needed to run the school activities. In various aspects the stakeholders have been contributing in supporting the visually impaired pupils in different school projects that are created to assist them, but still financial support is much needed to develop them and criteria for suitable context for learning. Also due to financial constraints there are still many challenges facing visually impaired pupils. For instance, running a school with disabilities pupils need a lot of money since the pupils need a lot of basic needs services like food, place to rest and other important services. So, we still need the financial support to overcome the different challenges and manage to accommodate visually impaired pupils (Head of school B, September 2021).

Furthermore, the Head of school A, states that "financial constraints lead to ineffective planned activities at school and this causes difficulties in the learning environment to visually impaired pupils".

Likewise, the DEO added by saying that:

To ensure academic performance there is a need of involving different stakeholders to provide financial support. When, I say involving different stakeholders, I do not mean only big stakeholders but even every individual in his or her position can support the efforts to contribute for visually impaired pupils. I agree that is true that there is a financial problem but I believe if we work together and we support the government the financial problem can be reduced to a larger extent (DEO September, 2021).

In the same line, (Kiomoka, 2014) argued that financial problem leads on other challenges in teaching and learning process such as; insufficient teaching and learning resources, shortage of teachers and unfavorable physical environment all these resulted from financial constraints.

Based on study results, it indicates that financial constraints hinder effective implementation of activities to support visually impaired pupils on academic achievement. Also, the majority of the respondents' states that the financial constraints if solved most of challenges that are faced by visually impaired pupils can be reduced. Therefore, this implies that based on the study results in Bukoba District there is need of supporting the visually impaired pupils especially in finance so as to ensure easy running of special needs primary schools.

Shortage of Infrastructures to Visually Impaired Pupils

Table 4.4 indicated that 13.2 percent pointed out that the shortage of the infrastructures was another challenge that hindered the visually impaired to pupils in academic achievement. Furthermore, the findings were supported by the DEO who states that, "shortage of infrastructures is not only schools challenge but also the national challenge". It is from this notion, most of the participants strongly state that to ensure visually impaired pupils achieve in academics the infrastructures need to be constructed according to the need and demands of schools.

Furthermore, through an Interview with Head of School B, commended that

For this school the infrastructures are still a challenge. So, we invite more stakeholders to continue contributing to improve and increase the infrastructures to visually impaired pupils. Since we believe that if there are infrastructures, most of challenges will be significantly reduced and will help them to perform better even in their academics (Head of school, September, 2021).

Similarly, through an Interview with the DEO added that

It is true that infrastructures are still a problem in some of the schools in Bukoba District especially in special needs primary schools. As leaders we are making much efforts in line with the government demands of ensuring all children balance with available infrastructures at school. Generally, the situation our school is not satisfactory as, I said we will continue to work in increasing the infrastructure in order to achieve the desired goal of academic achievement to visually impaired pupils (DEO, September, 2021).

The findings indicated that the existence of inadequate infrastructures is a problem but if the effort is properly developed by various stakeholders, it can be turned to an opportunity and even lead on academic achievement to visually impaired pupils.

In the same line, Wilson (2016) argued that limited infrastructures to visually impaired pupils are an obstacle to acquiring education. Therefore, this implies that in Bukoba District there is a serious shortage of infrastructures in special needs primary schools because based on study results majority of respondents argued that the infrastructures were scarce which could not balance with the number of visually impaired pupils available on most of special needs schools.

Inadequate Parental Involvement

Table 4.4 showed that 7.9 percent of respondents stated that the majority of parents are not involved in schools' activities especially in the matter concerning visually impaired pupils. Moreover, the

head of school A, states that, “parental involvement in school activities is still a problem which poses difficulties to teachers on ensuring teaching and learning”. Therefore, due to the limited number of parents to be involved in school activities affects even teaching and learning activities as observed from the study findings.

In addition to that the head of school B, also comments that:

The response of parental involvement in school activities is still low. Most of the parents respond only when they are registering their children and after that, they do not fully participate in the progress of their children at school activities which leads to difficulties for the teachers on accommodating visually impaired pupils; hence affecting even their academic achievements (Head of school B September, 2021).

Furthermore, (Morelle, 2016) supported the findings by stating that one among the challenges that are experienced by the visually impaired pupils is inadequate parental involvement in school activities. In the same line, Forks (2016) argued that responsibilities of teaching learners who are visually impaired is huge therefore, it needs different groups of people to be involved and parents as the important group need to be engaged with teachers in matters concerning the pupils. Also, parents were identified as the group that is responsible for teaching visually impaired pupils’ independent skills as well as expanding self-knowledge and awareness. Therefore, inadequate parents’ involvement makes the situation difficult. This implies that the parental involvement in Bukoba Districts in special needs schools is still much needed in order to ensure the challenges facing visually impaired pupils reduce.

Poor Education Policy

Table 4.4 showed that 5.1 percent of the respondents pointed that the policy concerning visually impaired pupils is not favorable. In the same line, the study findings were supported by Tungaraza (2010) who stated that although global education has shown significant changes over time through education policies, people with disabilities are still excluded from the five rights to an appropriate education. Furthermore, Ngulube (2016) argued that although different nations through different policies on ensuring equality in education to the disabled pupils it is realized that most of the policies formulated existed on paper and not translated into action. This implies that poor education policy was pointed out as the challenges facing visually impaired pupils on academic achievement.

Inadequate Motivation to Teachers

Table 4.4 showed that 5.1 percent of the respondents state that teachers are not highly motivated for their duties of dealing with visually impaired pupils.

The study results were also supported by the Head of School A, who comments that:

Teachers in school are not motivated regarding their work and their performance to visually impaired pupils. For instance, most of the teachers are living outside the school and they stay far away from the school. In this case teachers face challenges when they come to school because of the distances and even when they return home. This is one among the various challenges which are caused by inadequate motivation and lack of enough support to teachers due to the big role they perform to pupils who are visually impaired. It could be so good if teachers are motivated (Head of school A September, 2021).

Also, the findings were supported by the DEO, who added that,

It is true there is inadequate motivation to teachers who are responsible for visually impaired pupils but the government has been working hard to ensure that teachers become motivated based on their needs. Also, due to the efforts being made it is important for the teachers themselves to carry out their responsibilities effectively in order to prove their need of good work they are doing in schools (DEO September, 2021)

Furthermore, the findings were supported by Wilson (2016) who argued that limited teaching morale among teachers in taking care pupils with visual impairments lead on difficult in learning process hence limited them in academic achievement. Therefore, in order to ensure visually impaired learners are able to excel in their academics, putting challenges into consideration may reduce obstacles in the learning process, hence academic achievement. Based on the study findings, it is indicated that inadequate motivation among teachers hinder the academic achievement to visually impaired pupils in special needs primary schools in Bukoba District.

CONCLUSION

Based on the first objective the study revealed that visually impaired pupils are facing challenges such as inadequate teaching morale, inadequate training among teachers, and poor cooperation among teachers with visually impaired pupils, financial problems and inadequate parental involvement. This implies that all these challenges can be reduced to a larger extent if parents and teachers work together. Also, the study demonstrated that the challenges can be reduced if visually impaired pupils will realize their values. Therefore, the study concluded that there is a need to motivate teachers and training more teachers in teaching visually impaired pupils to improve their academic.

RECOMMENDATION

District Executive Director should allow more teachers to go for training for the purposive of increasing teachers who have skills and knowledge of operating teaching and learning resources for visually impaired pupils

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