

An Investigation Into Factors Influencing Enrolment Of Children With Special Education Needs At Kapoche Special School In Luangwa District Of Lusaka Province, Zambia

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Abstract: - According to UNESCO (2003), education is a right of every child whether he or she has a disability or not. This implies that all children with special education needs are supposed to access the needed education that will equip them with skills that are useful in their lives. Equally, the Zambian government's emphasis is that all children with special education needs are supposed to be in school because it is their right.

The major concern of this study is that despite the Ministry of Education recognizing Kapoche Special School as a government school with boarding facilities, the school's enrolment of children with special education needs has not been very successful. Most of the children in the district are not enrolled in this school. Instead, they kept home by their parents. This has been a major concern among various stakeholders.

The purpose of this study was to find out factors that influence enrolment of learners with special education needs at Kapoche Special Boarding School in Luangwa District. The objectives of this study were; to establish school-based, socio-cultural and socio-economic factors that influence enrolment of children with special education needs at Kapoche Special School. The study also sought to establish effective ways of providing education to learners with special education needs. The study was guided by Rieser's (2006) social model of disability.

A descriptive survey technique was used to collect data from 6 officials from District Education office, 3 Head teachers, 3 Deputy Head teachers, 30 teachers and 57 parents. The study used questionnaires for district officials, head teachers, deputy head teachers and teachers while interview guides were used for

parents/guardians.

Officials from district education office, head teachers, deputies and all special education teachers were picked using purposive sampling. Other respondents were picked using simple random sampling. Data collected was analyzed according to topics and themes as presented by individual participant's opinions as well as using excel and presented in form of tables, charts and graphs.

This study revealed the following school-based factors as having influence on the enrolment of children with special education needs in school; availability of qualified special education teachers, safety of children in school, a well-tailored curriculum, distance to school and lack of sensitization. Among the socio-cultural factors identified were; negative attitudes towards disabilities, lack of acceptance of children's disabilities, discrimination of individuals with disabilities; overprotection of children with disabilities and lack of clear information on special education needs. The study also revealed the following socio-economic factors as having an influence on enrollment; parental level of education, parental income status, poverty and family size.

The study concluded that the enrolment of children with disabilities at Kapoche Special School was highly influenced by many factors and it was imperative that the school and the community worked together to ensure that factors that lead to high enrolment of children with special education needs in school were enhanced. On the other hand, factors that lead to low enrolment should be addressed to ensure that they do not negatively affect enrolment.

Keywords: Children with special needs Enrolment, factor, Special School

1.0. Background of Study

1.1. Introduction

According to UNESCO (2006) special needs education refers to education and training programmes formally organized for children with learning and physical disabilities. The objective of special needs education is to assist those with special needs to develop so that they can realize their full participation in social life and development. Through this education, children with special education needs will acquire skills that will help them in their day to day living.

Education is a right of every child whether she or he is disabled or non-disabled as education equips children to meet the challenges of life. Education involves growing up knowing the environment in which we live. It is a human right with immense power to transform the environment where we live. According to UNESCO (2003) education is a powerful instrument of social change and often initiates upward movement in the social structure.

The United Nations Education, scientific and cultural Organization (UNESCO) world conference on special education held in 1994 at Salamanca, Spain, emphasized that education was a human right hence all persons with disabilities should be put in schools. Similarly, Universal declaration of Human Rights UDHR (1994) states that education is a fundamental right and every child must be given an opportunity to achieve and maintain an acceptable level of learning. This is important in the sense that if children with special education needs receive that needed education especially in an area of independent living activities, they will definitely be able to handle few challenges that come their way in life. This will subsequently enable them to be less dependent on family members.

In Zambia, special education was brought by missionaries. They opened up a school for children with disabilities and made the first attempt to teach

in Eastern province in 1905 (Katwishi, 1995). A school for hearing impaired children in Magwero was opened in 1929 by Miss Ella Botes one of the pioneers of special education.

Despite the missionaries' early involvement in special education in Zambia, no national policies existed to guide the implementation of inclusive practices in the country (Katwishi). Zambia did not have an articulated national policy on special education until 1977 when the Ministry of Education assumed responsibility for educating students with disabilities. Notably, three policies have provided the foundation for current practices on special education in Zambia. These are; the Education Reform Document (1977), Focus on Learning (1992), and Educating Our Future (1996).

The Educational Reform Document (1977) was the first major educational policy pertaining to special education. This document outlined recommendations for special education and specified the need for integration and adaptation of the general education curriculum to meet identified and specified individual needs of students. Furthermore, the document outlined the need for adequate funding in order for special education to be more meaningful and beneficial. The Educational Reform Document further stated that "All handicapped children like any other children, are entitled to education. They should receive basic and further education by full time study like any other children"

The second major educational document, Focus on Learning (1992), emanated from the declaration of education for all children at the World Conference on Education for All (1990) held in Jomtien in Thailand. Notably, the 1992 policy stressed the mobilization of resources for the education of all, including children with disabilities.

Thirdly was the 1996, *Educating our Future* which resulted from a consultative process involving the Ministry of Education, other ministries, international donors, non-governmental organizations (NGOs), and the University of Zambia. It stressed the following on the education of children with disabilities: “The Ministry of Education will ensure equality of educational opportunity for children with disabilities, the Ministry of Education is committed to providing education of particular good quality to students with disabilities, “The Ministry of Education will improve and strengthen the supervision and management of special education across the country (*Educating Our Future*, p. 8)”. The policy document has further emphasizes egalitarian principles, proclaiming that ‘where access, participation and achievement in education are impeded by gender, physical, mental, economic, or social factors, the government will seek to eliminate sources of educational disadvantages in order to enhance equity and acknowledges that ‘the concept of equity in education necessitates the diversification of the curriculum in order to suit different abilities, talents and interests (Serpell & Folotiya, 2010).

It is imperative to mention here that if the curriculum is diversified or rather modified to allow for accommodation of children with special education, it will clearly respond to the diverse needs of these children and subsequently they will be able to acquire the right type of education that is very important in their lives.

The Persons with Disabilities Act of 2012 provides for free primary education, ensures that persons with disabilities are not excluded from accessing secondary and higher education in the communities in which they live, ensures vocational training on the basis of disability and guarantees special schools for persons who cannot be enrolled in schools offering inclusive education. It also ensures physical access to educational institutions, ensures

individualized support and access to alternative forms of communication, as well as allowances to cover extra costs attributed to learning. This is aimed at having more children with disabilities access education.

In line with the United Nations and the policies on the education of children disabilities, the Government of Zambia on 10th May 2017 through the Ministry of Education transformed Kapoche Special Unit into a Boarding school. This was in response to the request made by the Luangwa District Education Board to have Kapoche Special Unit recognized as a school separate from Kapoche Primary School. This move was aimed at improving the services being offered to children with special education needs so that they receive educational instructions from specialized teachers and support services.

It is important to indicate that prior to the school standing on its own or rather being independent from the primary section, the district education officials had closed two units that were offering special education in the district so that all the learners were taken the special school.

The closure of the units was aimed at accommodating all the learners with special education needs at the boarding school. However, some of those who were in the units did not migrate to the new school but dropped out of school. Indeed, it is important to mention that the school has continued to experience fluctuating enrolment of children with special education needs. It is to this reason that the researcher sought to find out the factors that influence enrolment of children with special education needs in school.

1.2. Statement of the Problem

In 2017, the Ministry of General education recognized Kapoche Boarding Special School as a government school with good boarding facilities to

cater for learners within and outside the district. The school was built by CHILD Fund Luangwa so that all children with disabilities in the district could access the needed education. Prior to that Child Fund conducted a survey in 2010 to ascertain the number of children in the villages living with disabilities. It was revealed that, across all the villages in the district, there were about 106 children with disabilities ranging from physical to intellectual though the number could be more because some parents did not reveal their children's disabilities. However, the report also reviewed that majority of these were not in school. Against this background of children with disabilities in the district, the school has continued to register a minimal progression in terms of enrolment. For instance, the school has only enrolled 1 learner this year. Since its inception in 2011, the school has only a total of 43 learners, of which 10 are from outside the district and only 33 are locals (School Profile, 2019). This is an indication that despite the district having a lot of children with special education needs, few are enrolled at this boarding school. It is also important to mention that only in 2016 did the school enroll a good number of learners (9) but since then the number of learners being enrolled in school is minimal.

1.2. Purpose of Study

This study sought to investigate factors that influence enrolment of children with special education needs at Kapoche Special Boarding school in Luangwa District.

1.4. Objectives

1.3.1. General objective

To investigate factors influencing enrolment of children with special education needs at Kapoche Special School.

1.4.2. Specific objectives

- i. To establish school-based factors that influence enrolment of children with special education needs at Kapoche Special School.
- ii. To examine socio-cultural factors that influence enrolment of children with special education needs at Kapoche Special School.
- iii. To identify socio-economic factors that influence enrolment of children with special education needs at Kapoche Special School.

1.4. Research Questions

- i. What are some of school-based factors that influence enrolment of children with special education needs at Kapoche Special School?
- ii. What are some of the socio-cultural factors that influence enrolment of children with special education needs at Kapoche Special School?
- iii. What are some of the socio-economic factors that influence enrolment of children with special education needs at Kapoche Special School?

1.5. Significance of the study

It is anticipated that this study will provide useful information to MoE policy makers and educational planners that will help them address the factors that influence enrolment rates of children with special education needs at the institution. Additionally, to the school, the study will help management to be aware of such factors that influence enrolment rates and will enable them come up with measures to address or improve on them. Finally, to the local community, the study will help them understand the importance of having children with special education needs in school and many people will advocate for more enrolment and retention of such children in school.

2.0. Literature Review

2.1. School-based factors that influence enrolment of children with special education needs in school:

School-based factors are aspects within the school environment that relate to pupil's engagement and well-being. They include factors such as discipline of the pupil, characteristics of teachers; and facilities which influence attendance and participation of pupils in schools, educational materials and distance. The factors if well managed will help the child acquire the needed quality education.

According to UNESCO (2014), teaching children with diverse abilities is a big challenge, especially in terms of creating a friendly environment. UNESCO (2004) further points out that; learners have diverse needs and inaccessible environment within and even outside the school may contribute in excluding them from learning institutions. Those views were supported by Ogot (2005a), who said that accessible environment helps to keep CWDs in school unlike where schools had inaccessible environment. To alleviate this problem then the environment should be adapted to suit the diverse learners' needs. This involves organizing the classroom and the school compound. UNESCO (2004) shows that this can be possible by building ramps to classroom and school buildings, construction of adapted latrines, enlargement of classroom windows, painting walls to improve the lighting, leveling of the play grounds to ease mobility.

A study conducted by Sandhya (2016) in India on factors influencing the accessibility of educational facilities revealed that children with disabilities in India are among the most disadvantaged in terms of access to schooling and completion of elementary

education. The study further reviewed that children with disabilities are about four to five times less likely to go to school than the children from scheduled tribes and scheduled castes. Due to, school fees, transportation cost and parents not having time to accompany children to school, parents are often forced to make a choice between providing education to a child with a disability and without a disability (World Bank, 2009). In most cases, parents opted to provide education to children without disabilities at the expense of those with disabilities.

A study conducted in Comoros by UNICEF (2016) observed that physical environment of schools was not accessible to some children with disabilities. Schools observed were in poor condition, and even renovated and newly constructed classrooms demonstrated maintenance issues caused by poor construction. Litter and inaccessible latrines also posed a challenge to children with disabilities that affect their mobility or sight.

An educational research conducted in 2013 in Indonesia on children with disabilities estimated that 75 percent of children with disabilities in the country do not attend school (ASB, 2013). This is a clear indication of low enrolment of such children in school. Under the Indonesia's National Education Law, parents of children with disabilities have the right to enroll their children in special needs schools (Indonesia Ministry of Education, 2007). However, these schools are limited in number and can be expensive but some state schools accept children with disabilities and specific needs.

Human Right Watch (2013) argues that China devotes too few resources to education of children with disabilities. It imperative to note that if the government is not fully supporting special education needs programmes, then many of

children with disabilities will not be catered for in terms of education provision.

The Human Rights Watch (2013) further indicates that support staff and specialized materials are not available and training for teachers is limited, as a result a large percentage of children with disabilities do not enroll in school or drop out of school at the end of Junior Middle School. The study also reviewed that discrimination against children with disabilities is pervasive and parents have few and limited information about their rights and options concerning child disabilities (Malinen, 2013). This makes them not to ensure that their children are enrolled in school but will rather stay with them at home and this, results in low enrolment of children with disabilities in school. This is supported by Dawn Toronto Survey (1986), which indicated that violence against individuals with disabilities had the potential to hinder them from being enrolled in school. This scenario results into having few or less individuals with special education needs in school.

Bullying and disability harassment are widespread and represent an important factor keeping parents from sending their children with disabilities to school (Dawn Toronto Survey, 1986). Furthermore, sexual harassment in schools is recognized as a widespread problem for girls with disabilities. This increases parental concerns about safety of girls with disabilities making them reluctant to send their daughters to school.

A survey conducted by the Lebanese Physical Handicapped Union in 2009 reviewed that only 5 out of 997 public schools observed met all the Lebanon's physical accessibility standards for public building. The education of children with disabilities was also hampered by lack of reasonable accommodation including physical accessibility in buildings; lack of adequately trained teachers; lack of individualized approach to

children's education and discriminatory fees and other expenses such as transport. The survey also reviewed that approximate 90 percent of children with disabilities in low income and lower-middle income countries do not go to school. This is as a result of failure by parents to cater for school fees and other necessities.

According to Tyler (1977), schools should avail relevant and adequate learning materials such as books, charts, models, toys to learners with special education needs so that they can be motivated to learn. If schools do not provide such materials most of the LSEN tend to be bored and eventually shun classes.

Another research by Kipkosgei (2013) in Nandi south district Kenya on factors influencing enrolment of learners with disabilities in an inclusive education in primary reviewed that enrolment of learners with disabilities in primary schools is affected by lack of permanent classroom. In his research Kipkosgei used a descriptive survey research design and collected data from respondents using questionnaires.

Kipkosgei (2013) also indicates that the school's physical facilities or the school plant contributes an important component of learning environment. The facilities included the administrative offices, classrooms libraries. Such facilities were not enough and this contributed to low enrolment of learners with special education needs in such schools. It is imperative to indicate that if schools are to attract a lot of learners with special education needs, they should have facilities that will enhance effective learning on the part of the learners. Teaching approaches by teachers should also respond to the diverse needs of learners with special education needs.

Another study by Cynthia (2013) indicated that lack of supply of learning materials, opportunities to learn and deteriorating physical plants were often

the challenges faced by children with disabilities in their education. This is supported by Lewis (1999) in his research study where he observed that physical facilities as well as classroom-based facilities in schools prevented enrolment of children with disabilities. He further indicated that a school with good infrastructural facilities will attract more enrolment. On the contrary, schools with poor infrastructure will experience low enrolments as most of the parents will not desire to take their children there.

Najjingo (2009) also argues that inability for the government to fairly allocate funds to the education results into some special schools fail to run activities effectively and this result into many parents to withdraw their children from such schools. Najjingo (2009) further indicate that inaccurate curriculum that does not address the needs of children with disabilities does not attract many children to attend school as most of the parents feel their children would not progress well with such a curriculum. This is supported by Hannu (2000) who affirms that the success of children with special education needs in school depends on the flexibility and relevance of the curriculum that can be adopted to address the needs the learner.

The study by Kipkosgei (2013) concluded that lack of adequate teaching and learning resources, lack of teacher preparedness and curriculum not fully integrated to address special learning has affected enrolment of learners. He further indicated that the availability of teachers who were professionally trained provision of teaching and learning facilities that meet special education needs and provision of equipment may provide an opportunity to increase enrolment of learners with special education needs in institutions. The result of increased enrollment is increased access and equity and attaining benefits accrued from inclusive education.

From the study by Kipkosgei, it is observed that the above-named factors have an influence on the enrolment of learners with disability in schools. However, this study tried to investigate if such factors are among those that result into low enrolment of learners with special education needs at Kapoche Special School.

Another research conducted by Mutisya (2010) on low enrolment in special institutions in Rachuonyo district in Kenya revealed that there was a shortage of Special Teachers. In her findings she highlighted the following:

“There are quite many teachers who prefer to teach in schools in big cities therefore there is a dearth of special school teachers in rural and remote areas, despite the number of teachers training courses for special school teachers run by government and non-government institutes”

“Many special schools do not have adequate funds and find it difficult to provide competitive salaries for teachers. They pay less salary, which forces teachers to leave; some teachers get temporary jobs in such schools and stay for few years. As a result, there is a shortage of teachers and those who are in such schools, are forced to teach 2-3 classes at the same time, affecting the quality of the education provided to children with disabilities”.

Mutisya (2010) further revealed that Special needs education in Kenya suffers from inadequate funding, lack of clear policy framework, low progress in assessing and placing children with disabilities, few qualified teachers, lack of teaching and learning resources among others. In this case Nandi south is not left behind.

A number of special children in Nandi South suffer because they lack special schools to attend. A few schools that are there are far apart, they lack

equipment and are made to cater for a particular disability.

Distance between home and school may affect participation. According to a UNICEF study carried out in six focus counties namely; Nairobi, Baringo, Mombasa, Garrisa, Kwale and Kisumu in 1998, the proximity and access to primary school was a predetermining factor to participation in primary education. In this case, special needs education institutions, that is, the integrated programmes, are very much distanced from one another. This, therefore, may hinder participation of girls with disabilities in primary education and this resulted into low enrolment of these learners in schools.

Another study conducted by UNICEF (2016) in Rwanda revealed that most of the respondents mentioned that children with disabilities faced a lot of difficulties to get to school. Most of them have to work to school and those with disabilities who do not attend their nearest school have to walk long distances. The conditions can be difficult as there were many potholes and terrain could be very steep and slippery especially in rain season. Respondents felt there was need for transport to be provided to take children with disabilities to school. If children do need transport, it is very expensive for parents and takes a lot of time for them to accompany their children to and from school. This sometimes leads children to drop out of school

Mugenda (1998), for example, observed that children with disabilities were sometimes denied chances to learn in regular schools because the head teachers feared they might contribute to the lowering of the mean score in the national examinations. Because there was no legal legislation enacted to deal with such cases, such acts went unpunished, further increasing discriminatory practices. Such discriminatory practices resulted into many of the learners with special education needs not to enroll in school.

However, this study wanted to establish if legal policies in Zambia contribute to enrolment of learners with special education needs in schools.

The school system also lacked adequate number of skilled teachers trained in special need education, lack of budget and appropriate resources to provide streamlined education. These factors had a strong negative bearing on the enrollment of children with special education needs in school. Infrastructures were equally said not to be suitable for children with disability and this resulted into school's failure to enroll some children with specific disabilities.

Teasing and bullying and labeling of children with disability by the school community was another source of barrier to enrollment of children with disabilities in school as most parents of children with disabilities feared that their children would be bullied once they enrolled in school. This made the parents to remain with their children at home rather than sending them to school where they felt would be abused.

Ngira (2013) conducted a research on the inclusion of learners with disabilities among urban refugees in Ruivu, Nairobi. The study employed a descriptive survey design and targeted all seven primary schools with urban refugees in the area. 20 community volunteer workers were involved, Head teachers from the seven schools, 108 urban refugee pupils.

The researcher used questionnaires, Focus Group Discussions and Interview Guides to collect data from the respondents. However, the research revealed the following factors as having an effect on the inclusion of children with disabilities in school: unfavorable school barriers, teacher and host pupil negative attitudes towards those with disabilities, lack of efficient teacher competence in teaching.

Ngira's study further recommended that the government should construct accessible school with facilities suitable for learners with disabilities. Schools were also encouraged to integrate or rather involve parents of children with disabilities in all the programmes.

Njeru & Orodho (2003) in their research further found out that in most schools many instructional materials were in a sorry state. Most of those used in regular classes were developed without considering learners with special education needs and therefore the instructional materials should be adapted to meet the needs of learners with disabilities. Education that is offered to children with special education needs demands that it addresses the needs of the individual learners. This calls for instructional materials that suit the needs of individual learners.

Adams (1986) reports that, pupils with special educational needs may not benefit from the kind of educational provision for the majority unless exceptional arrangements were made. It is for this reason that special education refers to the special facilities that are made available within the ordinary school system, whether they are special classes or special provisions made in the ordinary school (Mohanty and Mohanty, 2011).

Mohanty and Mohanty (2011) further affirms that the absence of special facilities in the education sector will result in low numbers of learners with special education needs in school as this prevent some children to be enrolled in school. This study further examined if educational facilities at Kapoche Special School contribute to low enrolment of children with special education needs.

The class environment should consider the learners learning pace; hence it should be equipped with rich learning areas for learners to learn at their own pace. Conducive social environment is also encouraged.

If regular schools' environment is conducive, it becomes ideal for inclusion of learners with special needs. Schools need to have an atmosphere that is friendly, caring, accommodative; supportive and an atmosphere of freedom and guidance (MoE & S Uganda, 2003; Otiato, 2002). This develops the child's sense of security, confidence and ability to cope with others. Although the ministry has directed all the regular schools to enroll all the learners despite their differences, it was uncertain if all the schools had adapted the environment to suit all the learners. An environment that is conducive for learners will motivate them towards the learning process and this will enhance their academic potentials.

Moodley (2002) says that in order for the learners to be active participants in the learning and teaching process, institutions must ensure that teaching and learning materials are used as well as made available to all the learners with special needs according to their needs. UNESCO (2004) points out that the learners must be provided with learning materials in formats that meet their individual needs. In an inclusive setting, learners would require other resources over and above what is provided by the school. These include resources to enhance mobility and communication such as wheel chairs, crutches, positioning devices, optical and non-optical devices and hearing devices (Randiki, 2002).

In inclusion it is emphasized that teachers should use locally available resources to support learning (Moodley, 2002). Randiki (2002) and Ogot (2004a) advised that, the available resources should be placed at a central place, where several schools could access them. Making use of local artisans to make and repair the devices can also help in reducing the problem (Moodley 2002). Noting that these devices are very expensive and others are not locally available, it was uncertain if regular primary schools have the appropriate resources for all the

learners with special needs. It had also not been determined if this could affect enrolment and retention of CWDs.

School-Based Determinants Issues considered under the school portfolio are such as teaching/learning materials, physical environmental factors, the quality of teachers, and proximity to school, irrelevant, complex, rigid and congested curriculum, language and medium of instruction among others.

When children come to school, they have their own imaginations and expectations about school. At the very least, they expect to get a desk to sit on and in a classroom (Nkinyangi, 1982). It is therefore a shock to these little ones when they come to school and find they have to sit on stone outside somewhere under a tree, with their teacher writing on a blackboard supported by stones against the tree trunk. The initial shock is made worse by the experience of bad weather-during the rainy season, within a short-time, school is no longer interesting and many children dropout (Waka, 1980).

According to a UNICEF study carried out in six focus districts (Nairobi, Baringo, Mombasa, Garissa, Kwale and Kisumu) in 1998, the proximity and access to primary school is a predetermining factor to enrolment and retention. In ASALs areas, distance between schools and homes is far and the educational delivery systems are often incompatible with the lifestyle of nomadic people. Limited number of schools and highly dispersed rural population, force children to traverse difficult terrain and lack of transport makes access to schools more difficult for primary pupils

It is common knowledge that no policy on education can be formulated without first identifying the overall philosophy and goals of the nation. Minus the positive attitude by teacher towards learners with special education needs, schools will continue to experience low enrolments

of learners with special education needs (Mandyata, 2002). Positive attitudes towards disabilities are very important because they will enhance enrollment of children with special education needs in school.

According to the M.O.E (1996:66) “The ministry of education upholds the principle that every individual has equal right to education opportunity. This means that every individual regardless of personal circumstances or capacity has the right to access to and participation in the education system. Ensuring full equality access, participation and benefits for all pupils necessitates interventions at all levels to support children at risk”. This entails that children with special education needs like those who do not have should enroll in school without difficulties or barriers.

Moberg and Kasonde (2001) ascertained that 40% of children with special educational needs in Western and North Western Provinces of Zambia could not continue with school due to lack of transport to school, food, uniforms and other school requirements. Those in rural areas walked long distances to school. This was a disadvantage on the disadvantaged.

2.2. Socio-cultural factors that influence enrolment of children with special education needs in school:

During the study by UNICEF (2016) in Comoros, respondents all referred to strong cultural attitudes that prevent many parents admitting they have a child with disabilities. The stigma and taboo surrounding disability mean parents are ashamed and will try to hide their child. Many do not attempt to enroll their children in school because they are afraid of rejection and humiliation. They may be aware that their child has a right to go to school, but do not want to subject him or her to the teasing and abuse they may face from other children.

Sandhya (2016) explains that many parents may be overprotective which may, in turn, affect their child's educational outcome. Such attitudes towards disabilities affect the enrolment of children with special education needs in schools as most of the parents opt not to send their children to school but rather remain with them at home.

Sandhya's views are in agreement with Sabones et.al (2015) who revealed that protection measures were very important for children and youths with disabilities in order to overcome vulnerability.

Another study in China in 2013 indicated that competitive school culture and traditional instructional practices like whole-class teaching and rote learning have been seen as a major obstacle of inclusive education in the country. Large class sizes have also been seen as a challenge (Malinen, 2013).

The stigma surrounding disability is so deeply entrenched that one parent revealed not being told of their child's disability because the doctor was too afraid or embarrassed to inform them. Some parents of children without disabilities do not think children with disabilities should be in the same class as their child. They think their inclusion will slow the others down. There is also a perceived risk that children without disabilities will decline intellectually if children with disabilities are included in the same class.

Mutisya (2010) cited Mushoriwa (2001) indicated that attitudes are the greatest barriers or the greatest assets, to the development of inclusive education. They influence our perceptions of challenges, strategies to be chosen and goals to be achieved. There is a general belief that human behaviour and actions are influenced by attitudes, where by attitudes are seen as the cause, and behaviour as the consequence. Mushoriwa (2001) adds that attitudes include desires, convictions, feelings, opinions, beliefs, hopes, judgment and sentiments. This

means people have attitudes which affect the way they perceive, value, judge, interact and handle children with special needs.

Negative attitudes towards children with special education needs result into most of the people not to accept them. Conversely, parents of such children may fail to send their children to school for fear of having them victimized. This scenario affects the enrolment of learners with special education in schools.

Barasa (1997) and Otiato (1996) observed that people with disabilities were seen as cursed, demon-possessed and mad, which led to their discrimination. This had negative effect on the families and resulted in hiding these children from public to avoid ridicule. This might then lead to sexual abuse within the family (Dawn Ontario Survey, 1986). Maleche (1972) argued that even the cultural placement of girls which is based on beer, food, dress, children and gossip, did not encourage girls to develop high aspiration for education but instead led them not to enroll in school.

In Zimbabwe, a majority of students with disabilities are from low socio-economic status background (Mpofu, 1999). The higher prevalence of disabilities among children from low socio-economic backgrounds in Zimbabwe is due to lack of literacy (knowledge) and adequate access to preventive medicines and healthcare. Low socio-economic status families might typically lack knowledge about appreciation of community resources that would help their child succeed in school. For example, Mpofu (1999) reports a case about a father of a child with specific cerebral palsy who received a wheel chair for help of an international relief agency. The father used the chair as personal chair preventing the child from using it for personal mobility needs and transport to school.

A research conducted by Muthoni (2014) in Embu county, Kenya on factors influencing low

enrolment and retention of girls with disabilities in integrated primary schools reviewed that poverty, long distances to school, negative attitude, time wastage by teachers, drug and substance abuse, security, household chores, boy preference, pregnancies and early marriages were the factors established to influence enrollment and retention of girls with disabilities in school. Muthoni further reviewed that cultural beliefs about the causes of disability contribute to the negative attitude towards persons with disabilities. Such beliefs include taboos, witchcraft and curses hence are viewed as outcasts. These have a diverse effect on the way people perceive disabilities and further result into individuals with disabilities being marginalized.

The traditional practice of males being fed before females, and the female child receiving leftovers resulted in the female child not attending school. It is imperative to mention that such negative attitudes towards learners with disabilities made many parents not to send their children to school and this contributed to low enrolment of learners with disabilities in school (Muthoni, 2014). The research further reviewed that cultural practices such as female genital mutilation (FGM) and early marriages lead to indiscipline and eventual dropout of school. Many initiated girls find it difficult to return to formal education or concentrate on studies because their next expectation was marriage (Njau & Wamahiu, 1994).

Community attitude and participation: In the past People with Disabilities (PWDs) all over the world were considered socially and physically less capable, hence they were not easily accepted as useful members of the community. Some communities still hold the belief that disabilities occur as a result of curses, witchcraft, and even regard some disabilities as contagious (Randiki, 2002). Consequently, PWDs are isolated, neglected, rejected and their needs are not adequately catered for by their families and

communities. This greatly affects their educational provision. The community was less involved in the affairs of PWD for they counted them as being of no benefit to them. However, Kirk, et.al (2003) argues that there is a gradual level of acceptance

Avoke (2000) indicates that one of the most critical of all the barriers to free universal education for pupils, particularly those with disabilities is negative attitude and prejudice. Events in history show that disabled persons were badly treated; they were treated with a lot of contempt, maltreated and in some cases killed. In most African societies including Zambia, the birth of a child with any form of disability brings a lot of emotional stress and shame on the family members as a result of stigma attached to it. This results into most of the families with children with disabilities to feel shy to send their children to school. They would rather keep the child with disability in the home, away from other people and such acts meant that child could not access education.

Mantey (2014) conducted a research in Ghana on the accessibility to education among children with disabilities. The findings of research revealed that the negative attitude as a result of cultural beliefs and persistence low regard for children with disabilities posed a serious barrier to education of these children as less were enrolled in schools.

Wairimu (2011) also conducted a research on determining the low access and retention of learners with special education needs in Primary schools of Mathioya District, Kenya. The researcher used a descriptive survey technique with a sample of 10 head teachers, 53 teachers, 300 pupils, 15 parents, 1 District Education Officer and area chief. In this study, a questionnaire, Interview Guide and Focus Group Discussion were used to collect data. The study found that enrolment rate in public primary schools in Mathioya district declined and dropout

ratio was low. The problem of dropout affects girls more than boys.

The most prominent causes of declining rates of access and retention of pupils in public primary schools in the district are negative attitude towards education, teenage pregnancy, indiscipline and lack of responsibility among parents. There is also the preference to transfer pupils from one public primary school to another and also to private academies. The findings showed that there are social-economic, socio-cultural, and school based factors that pose a threat to the enrolment of learners in school include: poverty, negative attitude towards education, teenage pregnancies and lack of parental support.

A study was conducted by Ognondiek (2013) in which data was gathered from a sample of 51 respondents involving the categories of parents with children with disabilities, teachers from disability centres, social welfare and children out of school. The study reviewed that there was inadequate social support for parents of children with disabilities from the community and the government. The study also reviewed that certain cultural conceptions negatively affected parents' intentions to enroll children with disabilities into schools. This was as a result lack of acceptance and being embarrassed for the presence of a child with disability in the home.

Jelagat and Ondiji (2017) conducted a research on influence of socio-cultural factors on education of children with disabilities in Nairobi, Kenya. The authors used a descriptive survey design and collected data from respondents using questionnaires and interview guides. Their study revealed the following socio-cultural factors as having an effect on education of children with disabilities: societal attitudes; beliefs and traditional practices. These factors were said to have a greater impact on the enrolment of children with special

education needs in school. The way society looked at those with disabilities had either positive or negative effect.

Jelagat and Ondiji (2017) also cited Abenyega & Harvey (2005) further explained that the African Traditional approach to children with disabilities is influenced by beliefs, cultures and attitudes. They indicated that some studies observed that among the factors contributing to general apathy and neglect of children with disabilities in emerging African countries are beliefs that regard disability as a curse from God. Disability in Africa is regarded as a continuous tragedy and many families with children with disabilities tend to hide them instead of taking them to school.

This attitude of shame breeds overprotection since individuals with disabilities cannot be left alone to fend for themselves. Overprotection arises from the shame of others seeing a person with a disability in the family. In Kenya the most critical barriers to free universal education for students with disabilities are negative attitudes and prejudice. This was seen to greatly affect the way children with special educations access quality education in Kenya.

Abenyega & Harvey (2005) points out that some communities still attribute the causes of disabilities to curses from gods. For example, the people in Ghana believe that newly born child who is disabled is not a human being. It is a spirit; a snake and they will find a way of doing away with the child. Others will not kill but hide the child for they would not want anybody know as they view it God's punishment. This is in consistent with Avoke (2002) who notes that negative attitudes and persistent low regard for student with disabilities possess a serious barrier to social and educational attainment in Ghana.

Mushoriwa (2001) says that attitudes are the greatest barriers or the greatest assets, to the

development of inclusive education. They influence our perceptions of challenges, strategies to be chosen and goals to be achieved. Mushoriwa (2001) further indicates that there is a general belief that human behaviour and actions are influenced by attitudes, where by attitudes are seen as the cause, and behaviour as the consequence. Attitudes include desires, convictions, feelings, opinions, beliefs, hopes, judgment and sentiments (Mushoriwa2001). This means people have attitudes which affect the way they perceive, value, judge, interact and handle children with special needs.

Vayrynen (2002) argues that if Education for All is to be achieved, and particularly that of the PWDs and other special needs, it has to start with the change of attitudes to make education for all mean ALL, not just “ALL BUT”. Najjingo (2009) also agrees that negative attitude from peers; teachers and parents greatly affect enrolment of children with disabilities in school.

Negative attitudes usually arise from ignorance and fear of the unknown. Scruggs and Mastropieri studied teacher perceptions of mainstreaming and inclusion. They summarized results of 28 surveys of teacher attitudes towards including students with disabilities in their classrooms, conducted between 1958 and 1995. They found out that nearly two-thirds of general education classroom teachers supported the concept of inclusion (Mastropieri and Scruggs, 2000). However, when asked whether they were willing to teach students with disabilities in their own classes, majority were reluctant or unwilling to do so.

Majority of the respondents in the study felt that they did not have sufficient time, appropriate training, other materials and resources to enable them work successfully with children with disabilities (Mastropieri and Scruggs, 2000). It seems therefore that though the teachers may be

willing to accept the CWDs in their classes, other factors may influence their attitude negatively or positively

In Zambia, the M.O.E (1996) explains that family attitudes are not always favorable when it comes to handling issues to deal with education of children with disabilities. The document further states that from a false sense of shame or embarrassment many parents do not divulge information on the exceptional children and this problem remains unknown and untreated and further result into parents not sending their children to school a situation that results into low enrolment of learners with special education needs in schools.

Mandyata (2002) in his study also reported that the positive attitudes portrayed by teachers towards inclusive practice in education in Kasama district depended on their teacher education and availability of support, class size and workload. He further indicated that negative attitudes by teachers resulted into them not willingly accept learners with special education needs and this resulted into low enrolment levels of learners with special education needs in schools.

Mandyata (2002) talked about the positive attitude of teachers as being cardinal in enrolment of learners with special education needs. This study will further seek to determine the influence of teacher attitude on the enrolment of LSEN in schools.

Kasonde-Ngandu, (1999) also indicated that parents show discrimination to send children to school because little is occurring, teachers are frequently absent, few learning materials are available and employment prospects are slender

2.3. Socio-economic factors that influence enrolment of children with special education needs in school:

Sandhya (2016) conducted a research and reviewed that the more severe a child's disability, the lower the chances of the child attending school. The report also suggested that people with disabilities have much lower educational attainment, with 52 percent illiterate as opposed to 35 percent illiteracy in the general population. Illiteracy levels are high across all categories of disability, and extremely so for children with visual, multiple and mental disabilities.

Sandhya (2016) also indicate the following as factors that inhibit learners with special education needs to be in school;

Poverty: Because of economic hardship, families may find difficult to provide educational facilities including expensive assistive device and it becomes challenging for poor families to send children with disabilities to the school. Thus, poverty and disability go hand in hand. The combination of poverty and disability results in a condition of "simultaneous deprivation". This is a syndrome that sets up barriers to the participation of persons with disabilities in the normal routines and activities of the community, including regular schooling. This is supported by Mingat (2002) who in his research established that the richest households, 76 percent of their children attend school compared to 40% of the poorest households. This means that children from poor households have much lower attendance than those from richer households.

Glewwe, (2010) also indicates that poverty is regarded as the most common primary contributory factor for many children with disabilities to be out of school. He further calls poverty as a plausible explanation of school disruption.

Wang (2010) also mentioned poverty as a contributing factor for children drop out in rural areas of China. Children drop from better off households are more likely to remain in school while those who are poorer are less likely never to attend school.

Pscharapoulos (1985) cited in Chepkenei, (2004) concur with Mingat (2002) that the level of the family income is one of the most powerful influences on primary school enrolments rates in the developing countries. This is line with Sabones et.al (2015) who conduct a research among Syrians refugees and revealed that economic challenges of parents with children with disabilities was a huge obstacle in sending their children to school.

The studies in Indonesia and China indicated factors that contribute to low enrollment among them; limited number of school places, high cost of education, parental negative attitude or unwillingness to send their disabled children to school. However, this study sought to find out more factors that lead to low enrolment of learners with special education need.

A study by UNICEF (2016) in Comoros indicted a report by parents that even when barriers to enrolling their children with disabilities were overcome, they faced considerable difficulties in bringing their children to school. Parents of children with mobility difficulties found difficulties in accessing transport as drivers and other passengers are unwilling to allow children with disabilities to enter, and public transport lacks space and is generally inaccessible. This means parents face additional logistical burdens and costs in sending their child to school. This can be a deciding factor in whether a child goes to school or not for those affected by poverty.

Parents of children with disabilities felt there was a need for government financial support to families to meet transport, school fees and other related costs.

Not only do they have additional costs, but they also face a loss of income due to the time required to take their child to school and back.

Briggs, (1980) cited in Mbai (2004) contends that poor families may contemplate bearing the cost of sending their children with disabilities to school but might abandon the whole exercise when more exercises are demanded. A report carried out in contemporary economic policy magazine in January 2001 entitled "Determinants of school enrolment on performance in Bulgaria," revealed that the role of the income among the poor and the rich is a major determinant for school access. Those poor families are constrained in their investment in education and withdraw from school prematurely and this generally resulted into poor enrolment levels.

In determining access to education by children with special education needs, household income is found to be an important factor; this is because there are many costs associated with schooling and the education process ranging from school fees, uniforms and transportation (Nkinyangi, 1980)

Another research was conducted in Nepal between February and July, 2011 with nearly 100 disability advocates, teachers, government officials and children or young people with disabilities. More than half of the 29 children with disabilities revealed that most of them did not attend school citing financial challenges faced by their parents. The research also revealed that lack of information on disabilities, financial constraints and negative attitude towards disabilities affected the enrolment of children with disabilities in school.

Lekal (2002) in his study revealed that parental level of education has a positive and significant impact on the probability of enrolment. For instance, the level of mother's education exerts a particularly strong influence on the likelihood of the girls' enrolment in school. He further noted that

mothers who attained a higher educational level would ensure that their children are sent to school. Poor families and mostly those with low level of education found it difficult to enroll their children with disabilities in school because they could not afford to pay school fees in school.

Muthoni (2014) also cited Anderson (1967) who argued that parents' level of education, occupation and income levels played a significant role in the participation in education. Educated parents, therefore, due to their high-income levels could send their children to school while the socio-economically poor parents could not afford most of the necessities for their children and especially children with disabilities and this resulted into many children from poor families failing to enroll in school.

According to Esado (2005), education levels of household members are an influential factor particularly on children and it determines their access to schooling. Besides, a higher parental or household level of education is associated with children increased access to education.

Mitchell (2010) supported by Chitoyo and Chitoyo (2007) found that poor families with little or no resources were unable to send their children to school and the situation was worse for children with disabilities. Kabzems and Chinedza (2002) also noted that when parents are not able to raise money for school fees and transportation, children with disabilities become the first to stay at home. This is a clear indication that poverty contributes significantly to the children's access to education.

Woolfolk (2000) indicates that even if education is free for the poor, socio-economic status of parents may interrupt their child's education. Sanders (2010) further argue that the families with exceptional children often face complex family functions because family resources can be strained by multiple needs of the child with disability. This

makes them fail to raise more resources and subsequently send their children with disabilities to school.

Another study done by Ngau (1991) in Kenya on enrolment of learners with special education needs in school revealed that parent's level of education is important for children's educational support. Peasant parents who are also poorly educated are doubly or even triply disadvantaged. While these parents try to provide the best education to their children, the priority family goal is "survival" as the family does not even have proper and adequate medical care, food and shelter. This is contrary to Onyango (2000) who argued that better educated parents appreciate the value of education more than illiterate ones. In this case, educated parents are able to assist their children progress both materially and morally and such children attend schools as compared to those from less educated families and this makes their children enroll in school more than those from poor families. This study also tried to find out if factors highlighted by different researchers are among those that are influencing enrolment of learners at Kapoche Special School.

It was also reviewed that parents with high education and high income levels (government employees) were the ones who overprotected their children, confine them in the homes and away from public gatherings thus not ready to enroll them in schools while parents with low education and low income were ready to send their children to school but faced a lot of financial constraints.

Njeru & Orodho (2003) conducted a research in Kenya on Access and Participation in Secondary School education. The study used a descriptive survey with the sample of 567 respondents. The researcher used questionnaires, interview schedules and documentary analysis. The study revealed that parental level of education and economic status had

an influence on enrolment of children with disabilities in school.

During this study, it was observed that parents of high level of education dominated inclusive education because they attached value to education. The financial status of such parents also mattered. Those who were financially stable sent children to school while financially unstable parents were unable to pay school fees making their children rely on well-wishes, the church and other relatives to meet school expenses. The other factor was the cost of education and school learning facilities that included text books, libraries and laboratories.

Najjingo (2009) also citing Barton and Wamai (1990) pointed out that access to education in Uganda was affected by high costs, household poverty as parents of children with disabilities find it very difficult to buy books and other scholastic materials for their children.

Family size has also been seen to have an influence on the enrolment of children with special education needs in school. According to West (1980) and cited by Otunge (2004), large number of children in the family of limited income result in overcrowding in the house and this may in turn have a deleterious effect upon behaviour. West further adds that the parents overcrowding accommodation in poor tenement cannot protect or supervise their young children as they might wish and above a large family is quite strongly associated to socio-economic disadvantage. Ruther (1980) cited in Otunge (2004) indicates that large family size is quite strongly associated with socio-economic disadvantage. The large family size limits the parental involvement in the academic welfare of each child. Thus, leads to low participation of the child in school activities and may eventually lead to dropout.

It is important to mention that large family limits the parental involvement of child. It becomes a

serious challenge for the parent in a large family setup to cater or rather attend to all the needs of the children in the home and such disadvantages those that have special education needs who may be left out in terms of educational provisions.

The UNICEF (1998) explains that low performance of students with special education needs eventually means that education does not fetch enough benefits as an investment; parents get demoralized and see education as a waste of time and the resources that could be invested elsewhere. If parents see their children with disabilities perform poorly in school, they may opt not to send other children to school and this result in low enrolment.

In Zambia, it has been observed that challenges in the education service provision to learners with special education needs are those related to access to educational services. Kasama (2014) reported that that a study done by Peters (2003) on factors influencing access to schooling, the data collected revealed that socio-economic aspects such as parental income and level of education; cultural factors like and the approach to common customs on disability were found to significantly affect school admittance or rather enrolment. This is usually influenced by multi-level factors which according to Peters (2003) included; pupil, school, household, community and national.

The study showed that discovering and encouraging children to enroll in school is a difficult task. However, a “Child-to-Child” program carried out by parents and the community of Mpika in Muchinga province of Zambia is reported to have been fruitful in identifying thirty CSEN who had not been in school and consequently, these children were admitted to Kabale primary school in Mpika, Zambia (Peters, 2003). To this effect we can state that low enrolment of learners with special education needs is in Zambian schools according to Peters (2003) is as

a result socio-economic factor. However, this study will be endeavored to critically examine if such factors highlighted by Peters indeed affect or rather influencing enrolment of CSEN at the school under study.

3.0. Research Methodology

3.1. Research Design

A research design is a “plan or structured framework of how one intends to conduct the research process in order to solve the research problem and to expand knowledge and understanding (Kombo & Tromp, 2006; Orodho, 2003). In order to examine factors that influence enrolment rates of learners with special education needs, the researcher adopted a descriptive survey design. This design was used to obtain information concerning the current status of the phenomena under study and to describe what exists with respect to conditions in a situation (Cohen and Manion, 1994).

The design was deemed suitable for this study due to its ability to elicit a wide range of baseline information about factors influencing enrolment. The survey was also useful because it involved the collection and analysis of data that was used to have and make perceptions and judgments about the effects of a programme (Gay, 1986). A survey also allows collection of large amounts of data for a sizeable population in highly economical way. However, a survey gives a researcher more control over the research procedures (Saunders, Lewis & Hill, 2000).

3.2. Target Population

Mugenda and Mugenda (1999) define population as an entire group of individuals, events or having common observable characteristics. It refers to an entire group of persons or elements that have at least one thing in common. In other words, population is the aggregate of all that conforms to a given specification. Population also refers to the

larger group from which the sample is taken Kombo & Tromp (2006). However, the target population for this study was officials at DEBS office, Head teacher and Deputy Head teacher, teachers at Kapoche Special School, teachers at Kapoche Secondary and Primary School; and all parents from the 27 villages in Zone B in Luangwa District.

3.3. Sample Size and Sampling Procedure

3.3.1. Sample Size

The sample for this study included 6 officials from the district education office, 30 teachers, 3 Head teachers, 3 Deputy Head teachers and 60 parents (6 from each of the 10 sampled villages). This gave us a total sample size of 102 participants.

3.3.2. Sampling Procedure

Sampling is the procedure a researcher uses to gather people, places or things to study. It a process of selecting a number of individuals or objects from a population such that the selected group contains elements representative of the characteristics found in the entire group (Kombo, and Tromp, 2002). Sampling is necessary in research because a complete coverage of a population is seldom possible.

The researcher used purposive sampling to pick the following individuals; the DEBS, DESO, ESO-SPECIAL, DRCC, ESO-GI, and District Guidance and Counseling officer, head teachers and their deputies and all special education teachers. This was because these people had the information the researcher needed for this study. This is supported by Kombo and Tromp (2006), who argues that the power of purposive sampling lies in selecting information rich cases for in-depth analysis related to issues being discussed.

The researcher also used simple random sampling to select other teachers and parents. This was used because it gave an equal and independent chance to

every member in the population of being selected as a member of the sample and further participated in this study. Random sampling was also free of systematic biasness that could have stemmed from the choices made by the researcher.

3.4. Data Collection Instruments and Procedure

3.4.1. Data collection instruments

To collect data in this study, the researcher used questionnaires from teaching staff and interview guides for parents.

3.4.1.1. Questionnaire

A questionnaire enabled the researcher to collect a lot of information within a short period of time (Orodho, 2000). It also enabled the researcher collect data in a systematic and ordered manner. As supported by Saratankos (1993), questionnaires are used because they are advantageous in the sense that they can be used to collect objective and consistent data and give respondents time to consult files and are uniform in nature. Additionally, a questionnaire was more efficient in that it required less time, was less expensive and permitted a collection of data from much larger sample. Mulusa (1990) also supports the use of a questionnaire by stating that it allows respondents to give frank answers to sensitive questions. Moreover, a questionnaire makes the respondent feel free to note down their responses without any fear since they are not observed and do not have to give their identity. The questionnaire had both open-ended and closed questions. Open-ended questions used to seek in-depth information while closed questions could easily be analyzed and understood.

3.4.1.2. Interview Guide

The researcher also used an Interview Guide to get views from the respondents on one-to-one basis. An interview guide was used because it enabled the researcher to get verbal views from the respondents

in a face to face situation. Above all, it was easier for the researcher to interact and get views from parents who may have experienced challenges in interpreting questions on the questionnaires.

3.4.2. Procedure for Data Collection

Data was collected using questionnaires which were administered to the respective participants. The researcher distributed questionnaires to participants who were willing to participate in the exercise. Questionnaires were given to district education official and teachers which the researcher collected after a day. For the parents, the researcher made an appointment to all the 60 parents and divided them into groups of 15 each which were interviewed over a period of four days. During each interview, the researcher interviewed respondents in a one-to-one interview with the parents and recorded the responses for them in the Interview Guide.

3.5. Data Analysis Techniques

Data analysis is an eclectic process which occurs simultaneously with data collection, data interpretation and report writing (Creswell, 2002; Miles & Huberman, 1984). Qualitative data which was collected from respondents was analyzed qualitatively according topics and themes as presented by individual participant's opinions. Quantitative data was processed using excel and presented in form of tables, charts and graphs.

3.6. Ethical Considerations

This study stuck to some ethical principles; it respected the rights of individuals to privacy, confidentiality. The study also attempted to safeguard individuals' identity and data collected was treated with the highest level of confidentiality it deserves. The researcher also ensured that he sought permission from the District Education Board Secretary (DEBS) so as to be allowed to visit

schools as well as his office and conduct a research. Permission was also sought from the Senior Chief to visit villages. After this was done, the researcher progressed to schools and the community where he once again sought permission from all village Head men to use their subordinates as participants in this study.

4.0. Presentation of Findings

This chapter presented the findings of the study which sought to establish the factors that influence enrolment of children with special education needs at Kapoche Special School in Luangwa District. The findings were presented in line with the research specific objectives which were:

- i. To establish school-based factors that influence enrolment of children with special education needs at Kapoche Special School
- ii. To examine socio-cultural factors that influence enrolment rates of children with special education needs at Kapoche Special School
- iii. To identify socio-economic factors that influence enrolment rates of children with special education needs at Kapoche Special School

Questionnaire distribution and retention rate for teaching staff

A total 42 questionnaires were distributed to all the 42 teaching staff and there was 100% response as all the questionnaires were filled and returned.

Interviewed parents

For the targeted 60 parents' respondents only managed to interview 57 (95%). Three (3) participants did not want to be interviewed and the researcher did not force them to be interviewed because he stuck to the ethics of research.

4.1: Background information for respondents

4.1.1: Gender for respondents

Figure 4.1: Gender for respondents (N =99)

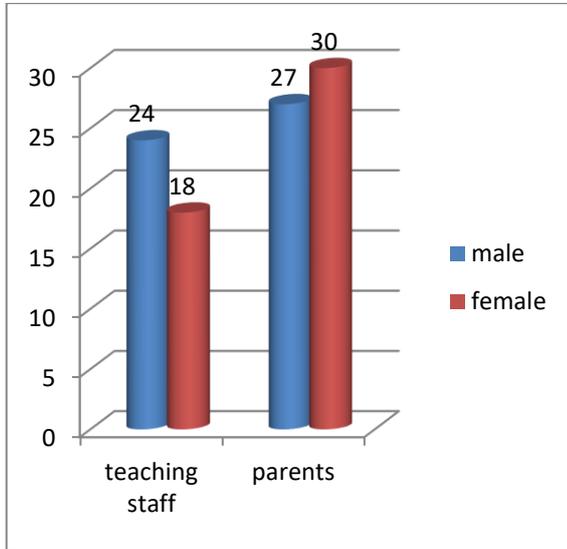


Figure 4.1 above shows that there were 24 male teaching staff, 27 male parents, 18 female teaching staff and 30 female parents that took part in this study. This gave us a total number of respondents to be 99. The table below shows the statics of respondents in terms of percentage

4.1.2: Age for respondents

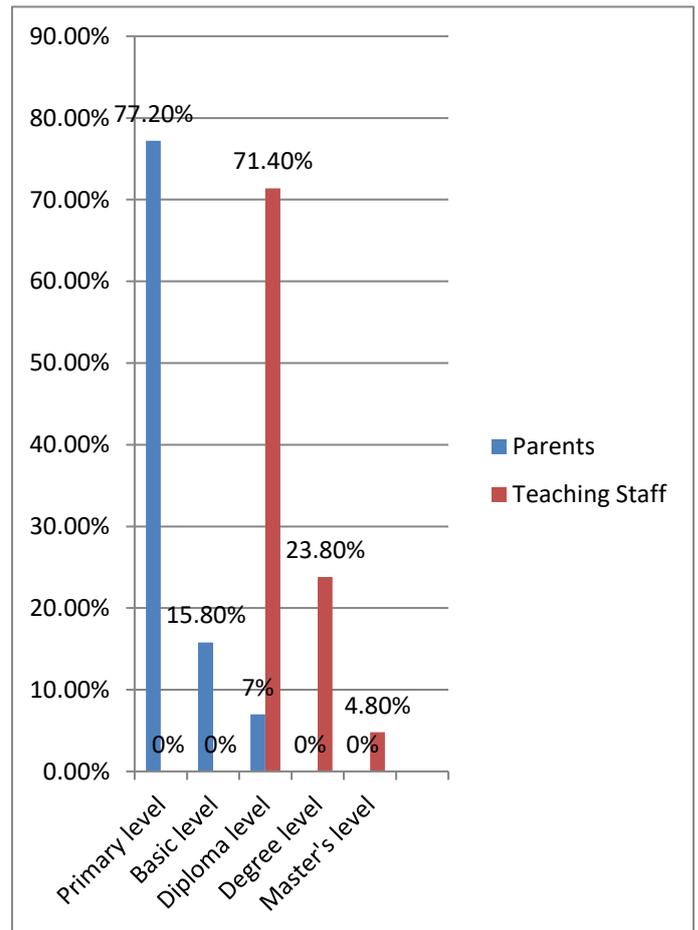
Table 4.1: Ages for respondents (N=99)

Category	< 30yrs	31-40 yrs.	41-50 yrs.	> 50yrs
Teaching staff	2	27	12	1
Parents	10	21	18	8
Total	12	48	30	9
Percent	12.1%	48.5%	30.3%	9.1%

Table 4.1 indicates that 12 of 99 (12.1%) respondents were aged less than 30 years, 47 out of 99 (47.5%) were aged between 31-40 years. Those aged between 41-50 years were 30 out of 99 (30.3%) and those aged above 50 years were 9 out of 99 representing 9.1%. this shows that the majority of those who took part in this research were of the age range 31 to 40 years.

4.1.3. Respondents' educational attainment

Figure 4.2: Educational level for teaching staff and parents



Analysis of figure 4.2 shows that 77.2% (44 of the 57) parents who took part in this study attained primary level of education, 15.8% (9 out of 57) reached grade 9 while only 7% (4 out of 57) were diploma holders. For the teaching fraternity, out of the 42 respondents, 71.4% (30 out of 42) were diploma holders, 23.8% (10 out of 42) were degree

holder while 4.8 % (2 out of 42) possessed masters' degrees. This is an indication that majority of the parents who took part in this reached the level of primary education while for the teaching staff, majority were diploma holders

4.1.4: Managerial/teaching experience

Figure 4.3: Managerial/teaching experience for respondents (N=42)

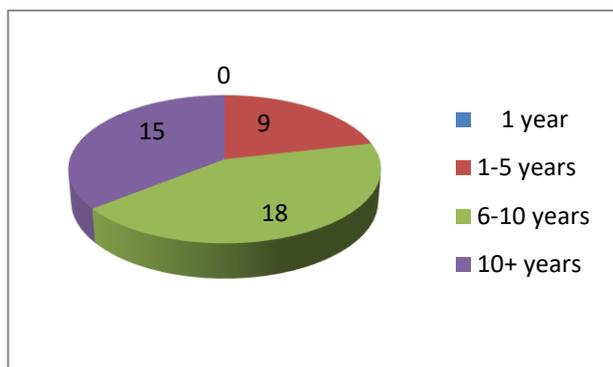


Figure 4.3 above shows that from the teaching staff, none was in the service for a period less than a year, 9 served for 1 to 5 years, 18 served for a period of 6 to 10 years and 15 above 10 years. The table below gives us the percentage representation in terms of the number of years served in the teaching fraternity.

4.1.5: Parental source of income

Figure 4.4: Parental source of income (N = 57)

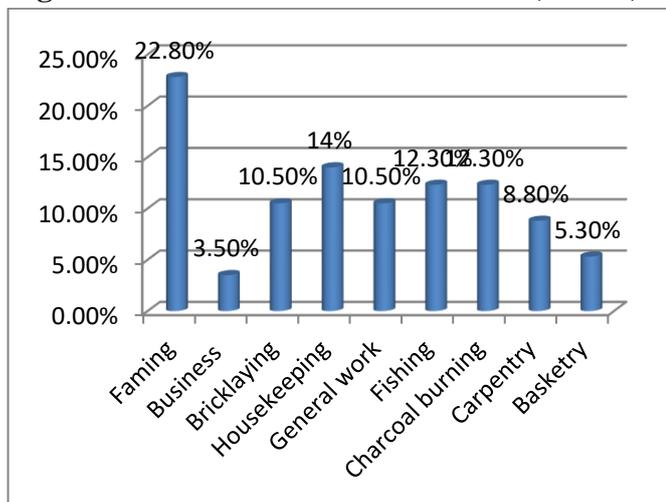


Figure 4.4 revealed the following sources of income of the parents who took part in this study: Farming

22.8% (13 out of 57), Business 3.5% (2 out of 57), Bricklaying 10.5% (6 out of 57), Housekeeping (maids) 14% (8 out of 57), General work 10.5% (6 out of 57), Fishing 12.3% (7 out of 57), Charcoal Burning 12.3% (7 out of 57), Carpentry 8.8% (5 out of 57), Farming 22.8% (13 out of 57) and Basketry 5.3% (3 out of 57). From the table we could tell that the modal source of income for the parents who took part in this study farming followed by housekeeping, then fishing and charcoal burning. The least source of income among the parent respond was business.

4.2. School-based factors that influence enrolment of children with special education

4.2.1: Teaching staff and parental point of view

The following were the school-based factors highlighted by both the teaching staff and parents

Disability friendly environment:

The environment in which children with disabilities were supposed to learn was to be free from distractors. Njeru & Orodho (2003) in their research further found out that in most schools many instructional materials were in a sorry state. Most of those used in regular classes were developed without considering learners with special education needs and therefore the instructional materials should be adapted to meet the needs of learners with disabilities.

However, majority of respondents to this study indicated the need for the school to all the necessary facilities needed by children with special education needs. Others indicated that the school should continue checking the wire fence as it was being tempered by some people and eventually that exposed the children in school to some unnecessary risks bearing in mind that the school is within an area where human and animal conflict was high.

Community sensitization:

If the community was sensitized on the importance of education of children with special education needs, more would have a positive attitude and enroll them in school. As one respondent indicated

“Sensitization which was done in our area at one time played a major role in helping the local community to discard their negative beliefs and attitudes towards disabilities”.

This was supported by another respondent who also indicated that:

“The school should involve stakeholders for support and sensitization on the need for special education and inclusiveness’

The above ideas by respondents concur with the views of Ogot (2005) who said that when parents and other stakeholders are sensitized, it helps in eliminating the negative attitude hence the parents of children with disabilities were encouraged to take them to school, and the community in general has been involved in inclusive activities.

Good/effective curriculum:

Most of the respondents indicated the need for the curriculum to be flexible to children with special education needs as some things proved to be challenging. Of the total number of respondents, 81% indicated the importance of having a good and responsive curriculum. This is supported by Hannu (2000) who argues that learners with intellectual disabilities should be allowed to show acquired skills even if they lie outside the core curriculum for majority of learners. This is also in line with the study by UNICEF in 2016 which indicated that officials explained that the plan was to increase levels of participation, including those of children with disabilities, through the introduction of the competency-based curriculum and flexible curriculum. Thus, if the curriculum is learner

friendly, there is a likelihood that more learners will enroll in these institutions. On the other hand, if the curriculum is unfriendly, chances of learners not being enrolled in school are high. It is imperative to state that a good curriculum that addresses the needs of children with special education needs is very helpful. Like one respondent indicated:

“Provision of a good curriculum with appropriate teaching and learning material is useful to learners with special education needs”

Availability of trained special education teachers:

A special teacher is someone who works with children and youths who have a variety of disabilities. Specialized teachers understand that helping children secure the basics is the first step in learning what they need to lead independent successful lives as adults.

Kapoche Special School only has five teachers, the Head and the Deputy. It was the view of the majority of respondents that the government should send more qualified teachers in special education so as to beef up the existing staff. This will help lessen the burden faced by those teachers. This was one of the constraints observed in a survey conducted in Lebanon in 2009 which revealed that the education of children with disabilities was also hampered by lack of reasonable accommodation including physical accessibility in buildings; lack of adequate trained teachers; lack of individualized approach to children’s education and discriminatory fees and other expenses such as transport.

Distance to school:

Distance to school is very cardinal in as far as access to education is concerned. If schools are far from where learners are, it will be every difficult for such children to access the school. Most of the children with special education needs face mobility challenges. Those whose parents cannot afford to

enroll them in the boarding may fail to go school if the distance is far apart. 25 out of 42 (59.5%) teaching staff indicated that distance had an influence on the enrolment of children with special education needs at Kapoche special school.

On distance to school, one parent indicated that:

“Kambili ana aja olephera kuyenda, samantha kupita kusukulu chifukwa chamutunda wautali. Chifukwa amakolo ao samatha kuwalipirira ndalama ya nyumba zaana asukulu (boarding). Ana amasanka kukhala pa nyumba” (Most of the children especially those with difficulties in walking are affected by distance since the parents cannot manage to put them in the boarding. So, they just remain at home)

Transport to reach children in their respective locations:

Some of the communities (villages) in Luangwa are far from the Kapoche special school and this entails that teachers have to find ways and means of reaching such places so that they help parents understand the importance of having children with disabilities in school. However, the school faces a challenge because it has no vehicle to help them in mobility. Respondents to this study revealed that transportation was another factor that influenced enrolment of children with special education in school. They indicated that if communities are reached and sensitized, they would respond by sending their children to school because they would appreciate the importance of education.

Safety of children in school:

Parents revealed that most of them could not let their children go to school because they feared that they may be bullied. This is supported by the Dawn Toronto Survey (1986) conducted in the Pacific Island countries and raised concerns about bullying which influenced parents' decisions to keep their children out of school hence contributing to low enrolment of children with disabilities in school. One of the respondents had this to say:

“Mupanda wa sukulu ya wana achilema ina guka mumbali zina, ingarengese ana kuchoka panja pamupanda. Ana aja panja anga dyewe ndi mikango, kugundidwa ndi magalimoto mwangozi ndiku pandiwa na ana anzao” (The openings in the wire fence and sometimes leaving the gate open may result into learners going out at any time and may subsequently be attacked by either animals, hit by vehicles or being beaten by those boys who play near the school)

4.3: Socio-cultural factors that influence enrolment rates of children with special education needs in School.

4.3.1: Responses from parents

Majority of the parents agreed that the following socio-cultural factors influence enrolment of learners with special education needs in school; Discrimination, Lack of parental acceptance of child disability, Overprotection of children with disabilities by parents, Poverty among households of children with special education and religious beliefs.

4.3.2: Responses from teaching staff

The teaching staff also indicated the following socio-cultural factors as having influence on enrolment of children with special education needs in school; traditional attitudes and practices; lack of parental acceptance, discrimination of children with special education needs, poverty among households of children with special education and overprotection

Based on the responses from the parents and the teaching staff, the following were the general factors indicated:

Discrimination of children with special education needs:

Respondent felt that children who face discrimination in school end up dropping out of

school. This is supported by the study by UNICEF (2016) in Comoros, where majority of parents with children with disabilities admitted that their children faced stigma and discrimination in schools where they enrolled them. This is in agreement with Avoke (2000) indicates that one of the most critical of all the barriers to free universal education for pupils, particularly those with disabilities is negative attitude, discrimination and prejudice. Events in history show that disabled persons were badly treated and, in most cases, discriminated.

Lack of parental acceptance of child disability:

Some respondents indicated that some parents do not accept the disability of their children but instead hold a negative perception about it and this prevents them from enrolling their children in school. Sandhya (2016) argues that parent's attitude towards children with disabilities and their education can be a key facilitator or a serious barrier to achieving inclusion and participation in a mainstream society. Parental perception plays a crucial role in determining the overall growth and development of a child with a disability. Social stigma and lack of acceptance about disability faced by parents is transferred to their children and this affects their education.

One respondent indicated that importance of disability acceptance as a way of helping children with special education needs feel they can as well participate effectively in the teaching and learning process. He indicated that:

“The most important thing is to encourage learners with special education needs to cherish acceptance and self-awareness. Teachers and learners should be encouraged to embrace learners with special education needs”

Overprotection of children with disabilities by parents:

Respondent indicated that parents who overprotect their children with disabilities may opt to stay with them at home than sending them to school. This is in agreement with Sandhya (2016) who argues that many parents may be overprotective which may, in turn, affect their child's educational outcome. Such attitudes towards disabilities affect the enrolment of children with special education needs in schools as most of the parents opt not to send their children to school but rather remain with them at home

4.4: Social-economic factors that influence enrolment rates of children with special education needs in School.

Poverty levels among households of children with special education:

Respondents also indicated poverty as having an influence on the enrolment of children with special education in school. This was also echoed by Najjingo (2009) and also cited Barton and Wamai (1990) that access to education in Uganda was affected by high costs, household poverty as parents of children with disabilities find it very difficult to buy books and other scholastic materials for their children.

Parental level of income:

This is supported by Pscharapoulos (1985) cited in Chepkenei, (2004) that the level of the family income is one of the most powerful influences on primary school enrolments rates in the developing countries. This is also in agreement with Sabones et.al (2015) who conduct a research among Syrians refugees and revealed that economic challenges of parents with children with disabilities was a huge obstacle in sending their children to school.

Parental level of education:

The level of education by the parents was seen as an important factor in the education of children with special education needs. This was also observed by Lekal (2002) who in his study revealed that parental level of education has a positive and significant impact on the probability of enrolment. For instance, the level of mother's education exerts a particularly strong influence on the likelihood of the girls' enrolment in school. He further noted mothers who attained a higher educational level would ensure that their children are sent to school.

Respondents also indicated child labour and family size to have less influence on the enrolment of children with special education needs in school. Some parents indicated the following on socio-economic factors that influence enrolment of children with special education needs in school:

“Poverty at household level is a serious challenge as many families do not have good source of income and such makes it impossible to send children with disabilities to school”

“Most of the parents in villages have less education and do not understand issues of special education. This makes them not to send their children to school”

5.0. Discussion of Findings, Conclusion and Recommendations

5.1. Views from the teaching staff and parents on School-based factors that influence enrolment of CSEN in school:

The study findings from both the teaching staff and the parents revealed some of school-based factors that had a greater influence on the enrolment of children with special education needs in school. Notable ones include the following: disability friendly environment, community sensitization,

availability of special education teachers, distance to school and safety of children in school, effective curriculum and transport to reach out the community

Disability friendly environment:

Majority of the respondents agreed to the fact that the way the school environment is structured plays an important role in the enrolment of children with special education in school. A conducive and attractive learning environment will attract many children in school. On the contrary, unfriendly or poorly designed environment will not attract many learners in school. This is supported by Kipkosgei (2013) who argues that lack of teaching and learning resources, not structured facilities like classrooms with proper desks will hinder enrolment of children with disabilities in schools.

Learners with special education needs will acquire skills when they learn in an attractive and conducive environment. Such environment allows them develop maximum potential. Similar views were expressed by Vaughan (2001) who argued that a conducive environment or setting gives children with disabilities a sense of belonging and they grow up to acquire relevant and appropriate skills. These skills are very important in the way the children grow and integrate in the community.

Sandhya (2016) also indicted that education system should provide access to protection, measures such as feeding programmes, psychological support services, assistive devices and child friendly space for interaction with others without fear of abuse and exploitation. This explains the need for a good environment for children with special education needs to learn from.

Community sensitization:

Sensitizing the community on the importance of education of children with special education needs is paramount to the enrolment of children with

special education needs in school. In this study, most of the parents interviewed (87.7%) and teachers (88.1%) indicated that sensitizing the community was an integral aspect and most influential in enrolment of learners. It was observed that when the school administration reaches the community and talks to them, enrollment would improve especially during the beginning of the year. If such is not the case, then the school experiences low enrolment.

An environment where learners with special education needs are learning has a greater impact in the sense that if it is not conducive, it will not attract many learners. On the other hand, if it is conducive, many parents will be comfortable with such and enroll many children.

UNESCO (2004) points out that, learners come with diverse needs and inaccessible environment within and outside the school may contribute in excluding them from learning institutions. These views were supported by Ogot (2005) who indicated that accessible environment helps in keeping children with disabilities in school unlike where schools had inaccessible environment. Schools with physical environments which have been adequately adapted contributed to high enrolment of children with special education needs.

Based on the findings of this study, it is imperative to state that, the environment within the school that accommodates children with special education needs should be suited for such learners so that they acquire the needed education. Conducive environments that are free from hazards will attract a good number of learners in school and that increases the enrolment.

Availability of special education teachers

The presence of qualified teachers in special education is an integral aspect in school. This is because such people truly understand the diverse

education, social, emotional and psychological needs of children with disabilities. Not every teacher will handle children with special education needs with care and caution. Trained and qualified educators in special education have what it takes to handle such children. Mainly, children with special education needs who are incorporated in the mainstream face some challenges especially if they are handled by teachers who have no adequate training in special education.

Parents will take their children to special schools were there are very sure that teachers are capable of handling them. This implies that the presence of trained teachers in special schools will have an influence on the enrolment of children with disabilities in school. It is important to state that the findings of this study revealed that many respondents agreed that specialized teachers are very important on the part of enrolment in school. This is in line with Mutisya (2010) who conducted a research in Kenya and revealed that schools had few qualified teachers and this affected enrolment of learner with special education needs.

Parents and teachers who participated in this study indicated the need to have sufficient number of qualified trained teachers who should handle children with special education needs. As indicated earlier, Kapoche Special School only has few teachers to handle children. Some of the respondents also saw the need for the school to have trained house maids (patrons/matrons) who should equally have the knowledge and understanding of special education. These people should have the responsibility of staying with learners in school all the time.

Distance to school

The location of any school is cardinal in as far as learner accessibility is concerned. If the school is located far away from where learners stay, it may be a challenge for the learners to access the needed

education. On the other hand, schools that are located closer to learners attract more learners in school.

Some respondents indicated that distance between their homes possessed a challenge especially on the part of one young and those children who had mobility problems. They observed that most of them had no capacity to enroll their children in school since they had no better sources of income. They also indicted that those who were closer to the school had a better chance of having their children enrolled in school. This is supported by the study conducted by UNICEF (1998).

According to a UNICEF study carried out in six focus counties (Nairobi, Baringo, Mombasa, Garrisa, Kwale and Kisumu) in 1998, the proximity and access to primary school was a predetermining factor to participation in primary education. The study revealed that learners who stayed far away from the school faced a lot of challenges in attending lessons.

In this case, special needs education institutions, that is, the integrated programmes, were very much distanced from one another. This, therefore, hindered participation of girls with disabilities in primary education and this resulted into low enrolment of these learners in schools. In other words, the study revealed that distance between home and school affected participation of children with disabilities in education.

A study by Moberg (2003) also revealed that children with disabilities faced barriers if the school was not within their easy mobility and reach zones. Moberg (2003) further indicated that that one-third of school-age children in India did not participate in school due to “illnesses and long distances”.

In her study, Sandhya (2016) also discovered that schools were sometimes far from the home and

there was a lack of transportation and lack of accessibility of travelling especially in slum areas in big cities, villages and remote areas. This resulted into most of the learners failing to attend school.

Safety of children in school

Safety among children with special education needs is very cardinal and it should be a priority in all the institutions that are providing services to children with special education needs. It is important to mention that parents of children with special education needs are very much protective of their children and this makes them to be very much sensitive of the way they want them to be treated. Kipkosgei (2013) citing (Dawn Toronto Survey of 1986) revealed that violence against individuals with disabilities had a potential to hinder parents from enrolling their children in school.

The study further revealed that bullying and disability harassment were widespread and presented an important factor keeping parents from sending their children with disabilities to school. However, this study also found out that most respondents indicated that parents were very much concerned about the safety of their children before and after they enroll them in school. The study further revealed that there was need for the school administration at Kapoche Special School to replace a wire fence with a wall fence as the current fence was not in good shape as it had some open spaces which could attract entry of either animals or people which may disrupt the children.

It is important to mention that most of the parents with children with special education needs will always appreciate schools that offer maximum support and protection to their children. This is because they feel that when their children are learning in less restrictive environments, they will be able to acquire the needed education. This is supported by Sabones et.al (2015) who affirmed that protection measures were very important for

children and youths with disabilities in order to overcome vulnerability.

Education system should provide access to protection, measures such as feeding programmes, psychological support services, assistive devices and child friendly space for interaction with others without fear of abuse and exploitation

Effective and accommodative curriculum

Special education by nature needs a curriculum that is modified and adjusted to suit or rather meet the needs and aspirations of children with special education needs. A curriculum that should be offered to children with special education needs should be the one which is inclusive.

According to (UNESCO, 2005) an inclusive curriculum is an adapted curriculum that has been designed to accommodate and address the diverse needs of learners with special education needs in a regular classroom setting through increasing participation in learning. This curriculum has components that relate to placement, retention, progression, practical lessons and group work. It also involves a range of changes and modifications in content, approaches, structure and strategies with a common vision which covers all learners with special education needs. It is important to mention that such a curriculum content should be flexible and relevant to offer optimal opportunities for development.

However, respondents in this study also indicated the need for an effective curriculum coupled with necessary and relevant materials that suit the diverse needs of children with special education needs. The presence of a good curriculum and availability of resources could help children with special education needs acquire relevant skills.

Moodley (2002) indicates that, in order for learners to be active participants in the teaching and learning process, institutions must ensure that teaching and learning materials were used as well as available to all learners. UNESCO (2004) also points that learners must be provided with learning materials in formats that meet their individual needs

Transport to reach out the community

Respondents to this study also indicted the need for the school to have their own means of transport that could enable them go out and reach the community and talk to them of the need to have children with special education needs in school. Mobility challenges can only be addressed if the school has either a vehicle or motorbikes. This can even help the school to check on the learners that may not be coming to school regularly. It was suggested that the school can either lobby transport from the government or other well-wishers such as Non-governmental organizations

5.2: Views from the teaching staff and parents on socio-cultural factors that influence enrolment of CSEN in school

With regard to the question on socio-cultural factors that may have influence on the enrolment of children with disabilities in school, respondents highlighted the following as some of the most common factors: traditional attitudes and practices; lack of parental acceptance, discrimination of children with special education needs, overprotection and lack of acceptance and negative attitude towards disabilities

Traditional attitudes and practices

Respondents in this study indicated that traditional or cultural practices had an influence on the enrolment of children with special education in school. Some sectors of society have negative attitudes towards disabilities and fail to accept them. It is to this reason that parents of children with

disabilities opt to make them stay at home rather than sending them to school. This result of findings is in agreement of Muthoni (2014) who conducted a research factors influencing low enrolment and retention of girls with disabilities in primary schools of Embu County in Kenya and discovered that cultural beliefs about the causes of disability contributed to the negative attitude towards persons with disabilities and this affect enrolment in primary schools.

Mushoriwa (2001) also supports this by adding that negative attitudes towards children with special education needs result into most of the people not to accept them. Conversely, parents of such children may fail to send their children to school for fear of having them victimized.

Avoke (2000) argued that indicates that one of the most critical of all the barriers to free universal education for pupils, particularly those with disabilities is negative attitude and prejudice. Events in history show that disabled persons were badly treated; they were treated with a lot of contempt, maltreated and in some cases killed.

Lack of parental acceptance

In most cases, parents who have children with disabilities live in denial as they fail to accept the situation. This leads most of such parents not to allow their children to come out of their homes but rather keep them in doors.

Sandhya (2016) conducted a research in India on factors influencing the accessibility of educational facilities by children with disabilities. One of the findings was that there was lack of acceptance on the part of parents of children with disabilities and this made them not to enroll them in school so that they received special education services. Respondents to this study also indicated this as one of the factors that influence enrolment of learners with special education needs in school. One of the parents indicated the following:

“My neighbor has a daughter with a disability, but every time we encourage him to take the child to school, he refuses and further indicates that he does not understand why the child developed paralysis of the legs when she was just born able-bodied”

The parent further indicated that the child with that disability was given a wheelchair to aid her in mobility by a local Non-governmental organization. But despite that and him leaving not far from the school, he could not enroll the child in school. It is imperative to mention that, failure to accept the status of the child has as a detrimental effect on the child's education in the sense that the parent may not be willing to send such a child to school

. Discrimination of children with special education needs

From the findings of this study all the 42 (100%) teaching staff involved in this study and 48 out of 57 (84.2 %) agreed or rather indicated that discriminating those with disabilities has an effect on enrolment of such children in school. It was pointed out that failure to be accepted, result into parents not to enroll their children in school. This is in line with Malinen (2013) who indicated that discrimination of children with disabilities was widespread among some Chinese communities and this prevented parents taking them to school. The study further indicated that parents feared that if their children were discriminated, they may end up being mistreated if they continued to be in schools.

Overprotection of children with disabilities by their parents

Majority of respondents indicated that parents who overprotect children with disabilities are in most cases unable to send them to school because they fear that their children may be mistreated in school. This has a negative effect on the enrolment of such

children in school. A good number of respondents agreed to the fact that most of the parents that overprotect their children were unwilling to send them to school but opted to keep them home. Overprotection comes as a result of parents having a notion that their children will receive a harsh treatment from fellow learners as well as teachers in school due to their status

Negative attitude towards disabilities

Mandyata (2002) in his study on inclusive education Kasama District indicated that negative attitudes by teachers resulted into them not willingly accept learners with special education needs and this resulted into low enrolment levels of learners with special education needs in schools. This study also identified that negative attitudes towards disability was one of the factors that influenced enrolment of children with disabilities in school.

Mandyata's findings are in agreement with Mantey (2014) who conducted a research in Ghana on the accessibility to education among children with disabilities and revealed that the negative attitude as a result of cultural beliefs and persistence low regard for children with disabilities posed a serious barrier to education of these children as less were enrolled in schools.

Negative attitudes towards children with disabilities was also highlighted by Avoke (2000) who indicated that one of the most critical of all the barriers to free universal education for pupils, particularly those with disabilities is negative attitude and prejudice. Events in history show that disabled persons were badly treated; they were treated with a lot of contempt, maltreated and in some cases killed. In most African societies including Zambia, the birth of a child with any form of disability brings a lot of emotional stress and shame on the family members as a result of stigma attached to it.

It is imperative to indicate that the finding of this study revealed that 96.5 % (55 out of 57) of parents and 100% (42 out of 42) of teaching staff indicated this negative attitude to child disability as having an influence on the enrolment of children with special education needs in school.

Negative attitude by community was also reported by Barasa (1997) and Otiato (1996) that most African communities still associate disability with taboos, witchcraft and curses. This contributes to the parents of children with disabilities shying off and hiding their children from public for fear of ridicule. The perception has not changed despite interventions by government, NGOs, churches and ministry of education among others pointing out that disability is not inability. This has greatly resulted into most parents failing to send their children to school.

5.3: Views from the teaching staff and parents on socio-economic factors that influence enrolment of CSEN in school

All respondents were availed with a list of socio-economic factors and were asked to indicate the ones which had an influence on the enrolment of children with special education needs in school. The common factors indicted to have greater influence by majority of the respondents include among them; poverty levels among households of children with special education needs, parental level of income, parental level of education and size of the family

Poverty levels among households of children with special education needs

Families that live in adverse poverty or have difficulties in finding what to feed have struggles in sending their children to school in order to access the needed education. Poverty among families where children with disabilities are found was cited

as one of the factors that influence enrolment of children with special education needs in school.

Respondents in this study indicated that poverty was one of the factors that influence low enrolment of children in school. This concurs with the views of Njeru and Orodho (2003), who reviewed that the critical factors that are responsible for the low access and poor participation of learners with disabilities in education is poverty. The two authors further explain that high rates of poverty at household level have made poor households either not to enroll their children in primary schools or fail to sustain an uninterrupted participation of those who are enrolled due to inability to meet various requirements.

Sandhya (2016) also agrees to this by stating that because of economic hardship, families may find difficult to provide educational facilities including expensive assistive device and it becomes challenging for poor families to send children with disabilities to the school.

Parental level of income

Majority of respondents in this study affirmed that the income stability in the home had an influence on the enrolment of children with disabilities in school. Families with good and stable income source send their children to school without difficulties while those with struggling sources of income face a lot of challenges to do. This is supported by Mingat (2002) who in his research in India established that the richest households, 76% of their children attend school compared to 40% of the poorest households. This means that children from poor households have much lower attendance than those from richer households. In determining access to education by children with special education needs, household income is found to be an important factor; this is because there are many costs associated with schooling and the education

process ranging from school fees, uniforms and transportation (Nkinyangi, 1980)

The income of parents influenced greatly education of their children. The study collaborates with Ruther (1980) cited in Otunge (2004) large family size is quite strongly associated with socio-economic disadvantage in the sense that it lacks finances to cater for the education of most of the children in the home. The large family size limits the parental involvement in the academic welfare of each child. Thus, leads to low participation of the child in school activities and may eventually lead to dropout.

Onyango (2000) also showed that parental socio-economic background influences their children's participation in education. This is especially so for the developing countries where children of the poor families are not provided with adequate educational materials and most of them are not enrolled in school. If enrolled, they are more likely to drop out of school than children who are from better-off families. Sabones et.al (2015) in the study among Syrian refugees pointed out that economic challenge of parents with children with disabilities was a huge obstacle in sending their disabled children to school.

Parental level of education

This study also revealed that the level of educational attainment by the parents had a greater influence on enrolment of children with disabilities in school. It is important to state that parents with a greater understanding of disabilities are able to take their children to school than those without such knowledge. This result of findings is in agreement with Onyango (2000) who argued that better educated parents appreciate the value of education more than illiterate ones. In this case, educated parents are able to assist their children progress both

materially and morally and such children attend schools as compared to those from less educated families and this make their children enroll in school than those from poor families.

Muthoni (2014) also cited Anderson (1967) also agreed that parents' level of education, occupation and income levels played a significant role in the participation in education. He further indicated that educated parents due to their high-income levels, enrolled their children in school, encouraged them to study by availing relevant and adequate learning materials such as books and ensuring completion of their education. On the contrary, the socio-economically poor and uneducated parents could not afford most of the necessities for their children and especially children with disabilities and this resulted into many children from poor families failing to enroll in school

Size of the family

Some respondents indicated that the size of the family had an effect on enrolment in the sense that children from large families may lack necessary items to be used in school. This is also supported by West (1980) and was cited by Otunge (2004), that large number of children in the family of limited income result in overcrowding in the house and this may in turn have a deleterious effect upon behaviour. West further adds that the parents overcrowding accommodation in poor tenement cannot protect or supervise their young children as they might wish and above a large family is quite strongly associated to socio-economic disadvantage.

Conclusion

The following conclusions were arrived at based on the findings of study.

Findings of this study revealed that socio-economic factors like poverty, parental level of

education, income status of the parents were among factors that influenced enrolment of learners with special education needs in school. Parents with low income could not afford sending children to school but those with good income could afford and this influenced enrolment rates.

Additionally, the study also concluded that school-related factors such as community sensitization influences enrolment rates for instance, if the community was highly sensitized on the importance of education of children with special education needs, they will respond by sending their children to school and this will result into an increase in enrolment. On the contrary, if there is less or no sensitization, most of the parents may not know more about education of children with special education needs and this will definitely result in low enrolment.

Other school-related factors that influence enrolment that were identified from this study included; the availability of trained or qualified special education teachers, safety of children with special education needs in school and a well-tailored curriculum that suits that diverse needs of learners with special education needs. A disability-friendly environment was also said to influence enrolment in the sense that parents will only send their children to a school with good facilities that will make their children access quality education. On the other hand, an environment that is not conducive may negatively affect enrolment.

The study also discovered that the school does not receive funds from the central government but only a smaller amount from the District Education office. This, according to the school authority has hampered many programmes in school especially in the area of buying basic requirement like exercise books, chalk and other necessary materials for effective running of the school. It was also observed that the school lack adequately trained staff to

handle learners with special education needs. It was also discovered that parents enroll their children in school but withdraw them after some time because of lack of funds to pay for their school fees.

Respondents revealed the following socio-cultural factors as having an influence on the enrolment of children with special education needs. Lack of acceptance of children's disabilities makes some parents to isolate their children and opt not to send them to school. Some of the parents indicated that in some situations, some parents overprotect their children and feel if they go to school, they may not be safe.

Discrimination of individuals with disabilities was said to be another factor that influence enrolment of children because those discriminated feels not to be part of the system and eventually drop out of school. Poverty among households was also highlighted as a factor that influences enrolment of children in school. Those parents who live in extreme poverty had challenges taking their children to school. On the other hand, those with stable income were able to send their children to school. It is imperative to mention that these two scenarios influenced enrolment of children in school negatively and positively.

Recommendations

Based on the findings of this study, the researcher wishes to recommend the following:

1. The government should ensure that the school is allocated with more funds to enable it attract more learners with special education needs.
2. The school administration should ensure that it reaches the community and conduct massive sensitization so that people will have positive attitudes towards children with disabilities.

3. The government through the Ministry of General Education should deploy more specialized teachers to the institution to beef up the already existing staff.
4. The school to collaborates with different stakeholders such as parents of children with special education needs, government officials, and organizations dealing with special education and community leaders in all the school programmes so that they appreciate services that are provide to the learners by the school.
5. The school to have trained house mothers who should understand the diverse needs of children with special education so that they provide the needed support

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