

Challenges Encountered By Students with Visual Impairments and Teachers In An Integrated School Environment: A Case Of Integrated Secondary Schools In Kericho District, Ainamoi Division, Kenya

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ABSTRACT: *The government's effort in dealing with access and equity in the provision of education and training to children with special needs has encountered numerous challenges some of which include; lack of clear guidelines on the policy implementation of integrated education, inadequate tools and skills in identification and assessment and lack of data of children with special needs among others. This paper sought to establish the challenges encountered by students and teachers in the integrated education program for students with visual impairments. The study was carried out in Kericho District adopting a case study design. Data collection was done by use of questionnaires, focus group discussion and document analysis. A total of 200 respondents participated in the study and data was analyzed using both qualitative and quantitative methods. The study cited a number of challenges that are experienced by the visually impaired students such as; the administration view them as a burden to school and many times they do not meet their needs like providing the necessary learning materials even though they pay fees and academic performance significantly indicated the nature of evaluation among the students in these secondary schools was clear that they are conscious about the needs of others. The government, through the Ministry of Education should provide teaching / learning resources for the visually impaired and blind students. Training for all teachers on special education should be performed. Informative campaigns at the community level with emphasis on the fact that disability is not inability are also advocated for.*

KEYWORDS: Challenges, Students with visual impairments, Teachers, Integrated school environment.

INTRODUCTION

The (NARC) government upon receiving power in 2003 fulfilled its political campaign promise by putting in place Free Primary Education (FPE). The gesture was received wholly by citizens for it made education accessible to the masses. However, the media has occasionally reported views from shareholders and human right lobby groups crying over the quality of education. This has led to mushrooming of private primary schools and parents have been observed taking children from public primary schools to private primary schools. This leaves behind a number of questions to be asked. (Daily Nation, 20th August, 2007).

The situation has further worsened with the necessity to address the special education needs. A research carried out by Kenya National Commission for Human Rights (HNCHR) has highlighted some of the weakness in the current education system; among them the fact that children with disabilities were missing out education despite FPE.

The main reason given is that the government has failed to make education adaptable for children with disabilities and therefore tantamount to violation of their right to education.

Sampled complaints that led to the analysis include the fact that children with disability were denied admission to regular schools while in some other instance government declined to fund the private schools started by parents. Children are forced out of regular schools apparently because their disabilities impact negatively on their academic and extra-curricular competitiveness of those schools. KNCHR noted that FPE plan and curriculum implementation is more wanting and raising more obstacles than solving them. (The Standard Newspaper, 20th August, 2007).

THEORETICAL UNDERPINNING

Challenges facing the visually impaired students in regular schools

Ndinda (2005) in her elaborate study, quoted the works of Saad Nagi (1965) in her Disablement theory and that of International Classifications of Impairment, Disabilities and Handicaps, WHO (1980). Their concept shared the view that the overall disablement represents a series of related concepts that describe the consequences or impact of a health condition on a person's body, activities and on the wider participation of that person in the society. Nagi specifically viewed the concept of disability as representing the gap between a person's capabilities and the demands created by the social and physical environments. It therefore means, the person is limited in performing tasks and roles expected of individual within a society. Discussed below are some of the challenges the students do face.

Compensatory or functional academic skills, including communication modes

From the expanded core curriculum for visually impaired students, distinction must be made between compensatory skills and functional skills (Moser, 2000). Compensatory skills are those needed by the visually impaired students in order to access all areas of the core curriculum. Mastery of compensatory skills will usually mean that the visually impaired students have access to learning in a manner equal to that of the sighted peers. 'Functional skills refer to skills that students with multiple disabilities learn that provide them with the opportunity to work, play, socialize and take care of personal needs to the highest level possible' (Lowenfeld, 1975, p. 97).

Compensatory and functional skills included learning as concept development, spatial understanding, study and organizational skills, speaking and listening and adaptations necessary for accessing all areas of the existing core curriculum. However, the communication needs will vary, depending on degree of functional vision, effects of additional disabilities and the task to be done (Hatlen, 1996).

Students may use Braille, large print with the use of optical devices, regular print, tactile symbols, a calendar system, sign language and or recorded devices to communicate. Regardless of all these, each student will need instruction from the teacher with professional preparation to instruct them in each of the compensatory and functional skills they need to master (United Nations, 1989). These compensatory and functional needs of the visually impaired child are significant and seem not addressed with sufficiency specifically in the existing core curriculum.

According to Moser (2000, p. 135), the following are the key issues that need to be considered in an integrated program for the visually impaired students.

Orientation Mobility

Mobility refers to the ability to get around in the physical environment. Foulke (1971, p. 1), quoted by Margaret, Maynard and Herbert (1989, p. 159) defines mobility as ‘the ability to travel safely, comfortably, gracefully and independently’. Effective mobility involves a complex constellation of skills and many who work in this area concur that it is not well understood.

Effective mobility depends on several things like physical fitness and motor skills. Buel (1950), quoted by Margaret *et al.*, (1989, p. 159) attributes the limited physical activity to the syndrome of parental over protection. But Jankowski and Evans (1981) quoted by Margaret *et al.*, (1989, p. 159) reported that, even in a progressive school for the blind students with excellent physical facilities, most children were overweight and generally poor in their physical fitness hence a daily program of structure exercise was urgent.

More recently, Hart (1983) quoted by Margaret *et al.*, (1989) provided an optimistic view that in early months of life of visual impairment, infants resist the prone position in favour of the supine and that attempts to encourage experience in the prone position may be successful in encouraging crawling and perhaps the subsequent stages of locomotion at earlier age. Margaret *et al.* (1989, p. 160) argued that, ‘if children do not have image of their own bodies or if they cannot maintain a suitable posture, then they will be disadvantaged in their attempt to control their bodies within the external environment and will have poor mobility.

Siegel and Murphy (1970), quoted by Margaret *et al.*, (1989, p. 160) provided a detailed analysis of the role that posture plays in orientation and mobility. In their study, they found out that there is a positive correlation between improvement in posture as a result of the training program and improvement in mobility. In addition to this, Margaret *et al.* noted that, the body image, posture and motor maturity and control are important factors in mobility. Linking these issues and the preceding ones is the question of relationship among conceptualization of space, motor and locomotors, control the body image and the posture. Any subset of this without the others will not lead to effective mobility performance.

As a part of the expanded core curriculum, orientation and mobility is a vital area of learning. Teachers who have been specifically prepared to teach orientation and mobility to the visually impaired learners are necessary in the delivery of service in this curriculum. Students will need to learn about themselves and the environment in which they move from basic body image to independent travel in rural areas and busy town and even in the cities.

The existing core curriculum does not include provision for this instruction. It has been said that the two primary effects of blindness to the individual are communication and locomotion. The expanded core curriculum must include emphasis on the fundamental need and basic right of visually impaired persons to travel as independently as possible, enjoying and learning from the environment.

Social Internal Skills

Social development ranges from the development of appropriate social relationship with individual and groups to develop independent living habits. To the visually impaired, family relations is crucial. Parents may be disadvantaged in fulfilling their role due to adverse emotional reaction to the impairment. Sommer (1944), quoted by Margaret *et al.* (1989, p. 164) identifies several clusters of parental attitudes towards their visual impaired children. For

instance; having a guilty conscience of negligence, having violated some morals or social code hence blindness as a punishment. He however did not exploit the impact of this on the children.

The nature of the parents' own emotional adjustment is important in social development of the child. Barry and Marshall (1953) quoted by Margaret *et al.*, (1989, p. 165) found a strong negative relationship between the social competence of 5 to 7 year old visually impaired children and the degree of rejection of the child by the mother. The literature reviewed reveals that social composition of visual handicapped child development differs from the sighted ones. Several factors are involved in this, for example vision is a source of information. Less partial often shows less severe social development lags than totally blind. Bauman (1973) quoted by Margaret *et al.*, (1989, p. 165) using Overbrook social competency scale found out that, children with some useful vision developed skills significantly earlier than the totally blind hence partial vision is important in developing social skills.

Schindele (1974) quoted by Margaret *et al.*, (1989, p. 165) used self-concept adjustment score to compare the social adjustment of 5th and 6th visually impaired with sighted students. He came up with conclusion that, while the social adjustment of the visual impaired student in regular integrated schools has developed in a realistic surrounding, the social development of the visual impaired in residential school is mainly the result of being brought up in a sheltered and unrealistic environment. In this case the good social adjustment of these children might be seriously affected as they grow older and especially when they have to leave residential school.

He also found out that, further for the integrated school group, there was a strong positive correlation between social adjustments and intelligent. Schindele suggested that the brighter children are more able to adapt to the greater demands placed on them in the integrated school setting. Margaret *et al.* (1989, p. 165) urged that, whatever the education settings, special attention to the development of appropriate social skills is important.

Scott (1969) analyzed social development in terms of social role, suggesting that a child's self concept is acquired in large part through interaction with other people and depends on the expectation that others have for the child. If they expect the child to behave with limitation that they believe to be characteristic of the visually impaired, then this limitation come to be part of the child self concept and will tend to be expressed in the social behavior. While Imamura (1965) Petrucci, (1953) Wilson, (1967) quoted by Margaret *et al.*, (1989, p. 165) using personality measures stated that, visually impaired adolescent tend to be more dependent and less assertive than their sighted countered parts.

In summary, social development of visually impaired children are different in several ways from that of the sighted ones and the factors that produce the differences are complex. Particular to note is that, social setting itself is heavily involved and that the characteristic of the social setting are heavily influenced by the reactions of the significant other people have who interact with the visually handicapped child. This applies to teachers as wells as the family, Margaret *et al.*, (1989, p. 166).

Visually impaired individuals do not learn social interactions casually and incidentally as they are by sighted persons. Social skills must be carefully, consciously and sequentially taught to the visually impaired students (The World Declaration for All, 1990). The existing core curriculum does not address this critical need in satisfactory manner.

Independent Living Skills

This area of the expanded core curriculum is often referred to as “daily living skills”. It consists of all the tasks and functions persons perform in accordance with their abilities, in order to lead lives as independently as possible (Hatlen, 1996). The curricular needs are varied, as they include skills in personal hygiene, food preparation, money management, time monitoring organization etc. Some independent living skills are addressed in the existing core curriculum, but they are often introduced as splinter skills, appearing in learning material, disappearing and then re-appearing.

This approach will not adequately prepare the visually impaired students for adult life. Traditional classes in home economics and family life are not enough, since they assume a basic level of knowledge, acquire incidentally through vision. The skills and knowledge that sighted students acquire by casually and incidentally observing and interacting with their environment are often difficult, if not impossible, for the visually impaired students to learn without direct, sequential instruction by knowledgeable persons.

Recreation and Leisure Skills

Westman (1990) stated that, the limited interpretation of public law 94-142 has led to the belief that educational disabilities and handicapped can be resolved through educational alone. As a result of the neglect of the spectrum of functional disabilities, many children grow up into adulthood academically remediate but remain friendless, lonely and unproductive. The experiencing of special education tracking also may instill a negative self concept of disability that later foster dependency. These social disabilities can be more handicapping than academic skill disability (Kronick, 1981). Many adults with educational disability and handicapped also experience difficulties in their personal, social and emotional adjustment and are unable to work productively.

Another problem is lack of appreciation of education disabilities, their heterogeneity and their changing manifestations throughout the life span of an individual. It is good to prepare young people with handicapped for transition to postsecondary program or vocational training from the elementary level on. At this time; little has been done on educational disability in business, industry, union, government agencies including army forces.

Most important profession needs education and training in the nature and management of education disability and handicapped. Throughout their lives some individuals with educational disabilities have been exposed to teachers, parents, peers and others mentors who were not prepared or willing to understand their needs or to help cope with their problems.

Skills in recreation and leisure are seldom offered as a part of the existing core curriculum. Rather, physical education in the form of team games and athletics are the usual ways in which fitness needs are met for sighted students. Many of the activities in physical education are excellent and appropriate for visually impaired student. In addition, however these students need to develop activities in recreation and leisure that they can enjoy throughout their adult lives (Moser, 2000).

Most often sighted persons select their recreation and leisure activity repertoire by visually observing activities and choosing those in which they wish to participate. The teaching of the recreation and leisure and skills to the visually impaired students must be planned and deliberately taught and should focus on the development of the one life-long skills.

Career Education

The role of the child in the society cannot be underestimated and the system that influence the development of a child is the very crucial that is the society, organization, classroom peers and families. Society values childhood as a preparation for adult responsibility and production in work hence attention is devoted to public education. If childhood is ignored, education suffers and hence risk with inadequate preparation to cope with the responsibility of democratic society. It is in the school where children acquire skills and knowledge. School cannot be understood outside their community and society.

There is need for general vocational education, as offered in the traditional core curriculum for the visually impaired as well as the need for career education offer, especially for the visually impaired students. Many of the skills and knowledge offered to all students through vocational education can be of value to the visually impaired students (The World Declaration on Education for All, 1990). They will not be sufficient, however to prepare students for adult, since such instruction assumes a basic knowledge of the world of work based on prior visual experiences.

Career education in an expanded core curriculum will provide the visually impaired learner of all ages with the opportunity to learn first-hand the work done by the bank teller, the gardener, the social worker, the artist's and others. It will provide the student with the opportunity to explore strength and interest in a systematic, well-planned manner. Once more, the major problem facing the visually impaired learners is lack of information about and jobs that the sighted students acquire by observation (The World Declaration on Education for all, 1990, p. 218).

Technology

Technology is a tool to unlock learning and expand the horizons of students (Hatlen, 1996). It is not, in reality, a curriculum area. However, it is added to the expanded core curriculum because technology occupies a special place in the education of the visually impaired learners. Technology can be a great equalizer (Ross, 1988). For the Braille user, it allows the students to provide feedback to teacher by first producing material in Braille for personal use, and then in print for the teachers, class mates and for the parents.

It gives the visually impaired learner the capacity of storing and retrieving information. It brings the gift of a library under the fingertips of the visually impaired person. Technology enhances communication and learning, as well as expanded the world of the visually impaired person in many significant ways. Thus, technology is a tool to master and is essential as a part of the expanded core curriculum.

Westman (1990, p. 630) states that Microcomputer –based education offers an advantage of one-to one learning environment free of expose of errors to others. The individualization and immediate feedback can stimulate the initiative of a child through the children's control of a program (Boeltcher, 1993). Therefore, the role of computer in special education is promising for many children (Watkins & Webb 1981).

There is need for the Government to supply speech computers for the blind to schools with integrated program for the visually impaired students as part of resources for teaching and learning.

Teacher Preparation

The visual acuity of children diagnosed as being visually impaired students varies greatly. Through the use of thorough, systematic training, most students with remaining functional vision can be taught to better and more efficiently utilize their remaining vision (Ndurumo, 1993). The responsibility for performing a functional vision assessment, planning appropriate learning activities for effective visual utilization and instructing students in using their functional vision in effective and efficient ways is clearly an area of the expanded core curriculum (Moser, 2000). Educational responsibility for teaching visual efficiency skills falls to the professionally prepared teacher of visually impaired learners.

Bring together all of these skills learned in the expanded core curriculum produces a concept of the visually impaired person in the community. It is difficult to imagine that a congenitally visually impaired person could be entirely at ease and at home within the social, recreational and vocational structure of the general community without mastering the elements of the expanded core curriculum.

What is known about congenitally visually impaired person is that, unless skills such as orientation and mobility, social interaction and independent living are learned, these students are at high risk for lonely, isolate, unproductive lives (Lorimer, 2000). The expanded core curriculum is the heart of the responsibility of educators serving visually impaired students. These areas are not adequately addressed by regular classroom teachers, nor should they be, for this is the core curriculum that is essential only to visually impaired students, and it epitomizes their "right to be different".

METHODOLOGY

This study was conducted in Ainamoi division of Kericho district in Rift Valley province of Kenya. A case study design was employed as Kothari (2004, p.142) states that, the case study method is a very popular form of qualitative analysis and involves a careful and complete observation of a social unit, be it a person or an institution.

The target population of the study comprised students and teachers in Kericho Tea Boys and Kipsigis Girls secondary schools. The students were further classified into two categories: the sighted and the students with visual impairment. The author used a sample size of 200 respondents. All the students with visual impairment in the two schools were interviewed considering their total population which is reasonably small as compared to their sighted counterparts in an integrated school environment. According to the constitution of Kenya Society for the Blind, one student with visual impairment is equated to a class of 40 sighted students.

According to Gay, quoted by Mugenda (1999, p. 43) it was suggested that for descriptive studies, ten percent (10%) of the accessible population is enough. In Kipsigis girls' there were 1200 students while Kericho Tea had 800 students giving a total of 2000 students. 10% of these thus gave a sample of 200 students. This number was then divided in two so that each school could get 100 respondents. Then concerning the visually impaired students, there was 1 girl from Kipsigis and the remaining 7 were boys for Kericho Tea giving a total of 8 visually impaired students. Given that each visually impaired student represents a full class of 40 sighted students, but if 40 students were considered in each form, then, the figure would be

large so the author opted to get half of the class of 40 hence 20 students were randomly selected from each form giving a total of 80 students representing the impaired group. The remaining 120 were sighted students randomly selected from each form. So the sample population of students in total was 200 but those who responded were 160. The teachers who participated in the study were thirty two (32).

The data from the questionnaires were analysed and presented in tables. Frequencies and percentages were used to compare different variables. Data from interviews were analyzed using descriptive methods.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Challenges experienced by students in integrated secondary schools

With over 77 districts in Kenya, the integrated education program started in only 34 (file:///MOEST) districts for pilot and first phase implementation. However, not all seem to have been well, especially given the fact that the program is dealing with students with special needs in the process of their academic pursuit. Accordingly, the researcher wanted to find out some of the major challenges affecting students and teachers in regard to the integrated education program in Kericho District.

Table 1: Challenges experienced by students in integrated secondary schools

Statement	Frequency (N=60)	Percentage
The school does not have physical facilities for visually impaired students	97	60.6%
The school does not have specially trained teachers to handle students with visual impairment	103	64.4%
Students with visual impairment have problems in moving from place to place within the school	90	55.3%
Students with visual impairment have problems with making friends	89	55.6%
Teachers usually neglect the needs of the students with visual impairment in class	111	69.4%
Students with visual impairment usually feel lonely and less recognized by others	106	66.3%
Students with visual impairment are always caught up with time while doing the assignment in class	95	59.3%
Some students have dropped out of school due to frustration from difficulties they encountered	91	56.8%

Respondents were further asked to indicate on a Likert scale of “Strongly Agree”, “Agree”, “Undecided”, “Disagree” and Strongly Disagree”, issues that were thought to be challenging to the program.

In this regard, the author’s interest was on how each question item was scored affirmatively as “Disagree” by the respondents. To that effect, the following table shows a summary of the

responses to the various question items asked by the researcher and the corresponding frequencies and percentages at which they were scored as “Disagree”.

It is clear from the table above that, the majority 97 (60.6%) of the respondents agreed with the statement that their school does not have facilities for visually impaired students. When further asked to explain their responses, the respondents said that their respective schools have basic facilities like classrooms, playground, books, laboratory and the library, among other facilities. However, the greatest issue according to them is that these facilities do not have resources needed by the students with visual impairment and the blind students. For instance, reading books in the library are in small print which the students with visual problems cannot make use of.

Like any other student in an institution of formal learning, the visually impaired students are being educated and socialized into the society's ways of life. Therefore, the author sought to find out if such students face any challenges in the social life, outside the academic domain. The findings show that 111 (69.4%) of the respondents said that teachers do not neglect the special needs of students with visual impairment and the blind. Further, 106 (66.3%) of the respondents said that students with visual impairment do feel lonely or less recognized by the sighted students in class.

However, 95 (59.3%) of sighted respondents said that students with visual impairment are always caught up with time and so need more time than sighted students in accomplishing class work. This was explained by the fact that they have to write using Braille, which takes time as compared to sighted students that write directly using pens in their books. In a visit to one of the classes with students with visual impairment, the author noticed that students with visual impairment would take almost 30 minutes longer while doing an assignment in a regular class.

When the respondents were asked to respond to question on whether the school has specialized teachers who handle the visually impaired cases, 103 (64.4%) agreed. To the visually impaired students, teachers do not have skills in handling subjects like mathematics and geography hence making the students not to attain any concept taught during the lessons.

During the discussion all the teachers except one said that they were not trained to teach students with disabilities like visual impairment. However, they said that when the program was inceptioned in their respective schools, it was the government's plan to give each school a trained teacher to handle such students but up to the time of the study, this has not been done. Therefore, they were forced to teach the students as just like the normal class without giving them extra coaching after class lessons.

According to Ndurumo (1993) educational responsibility for teaching visual efficiency skills falls to the professionally prepared teacher for visually impaired learners. This means that students with visual impairment in integrated secondary schools in Kericho District are likely to be lacking visual efficiency skills, which is an essential component of their education process. Therefore, the findings provide a clear evidence of lack of teachers with special training to handle student with visual impairment within the integrated secondary schools in Kericho District.

Challenges experienced by teachers and head teachers in the integrated schools

Table 2: Challenges experienced by teachers and head teachers in the integrated schools

Statement of challenges	Frequency N=32	Percent
This school does not have teaching and learning facilities for visually impaired students	26	81.3
This school does not have specially trained teachers to handle students with visual impairment	18	53.3
Students with visual impairment have additional problems that influence their performance	23	71.9
Teachers usually neglect / ignore the needs of visually impaired students in class	20	62.5
Students with visual impairment are always caught up with time and so need more time than sighted students in class	19	59.4
The schools do not have funds to purchase the teaching and learning material for the program	21	65.7

The study of the table above reveals that out of the 32 teachers' respondents 26 (81.3%) agreed that the school does not have teaching and learning material to aid the teaching and learning of students with visual impairment. When asked why they said so, they pointed out that, the resources available so far are not effective. They gave an example that the printer for the Braille paper work once broke down and it has proven very expensive for the school to repair. The other 6 (18.8%) do not agree because teaching subject like history and Christian Religious Education does not really require tangible resources except text books in large print.

When teachers were asked if their respective schools do have specialized trained teachers to handle students with visual impairment, 14 (43.8%) disagreed. Those who disagreed gave reasons as those teachers of geography, mathematics and languages have attended in service courses on skills acquisition. Those who agreed argued that, the in-service course undertaken during the holidays requires regular updating due to changes in curriculum. Secondly, students with visual impairment need extra time for coaching in the subject that they find it difficult to understand and teachers need not only to be trained in skills acquisition but also to be motivated to go an extra mile in assisting the needy students.

When teachers were asked to response whether the student with visual impairment have additional problems that influence their performance, 23 (71.9%) agreed. Teachers noted that students with visual impairment do have additional problems which they cannot solve even though it influences their class performance. Some of the problems include lack of school fees, some students are aware that their parents have taken them to school in order to keep them away from being a nuisance to them at home. An example is for a student who had completed school but the parents did not want him at home.

When asked if teachers usually ignore or neglect the students with visual impairment and the blind, 20 (65.5%) agreed noting that whenever there is a new teacher, the school administration fails to induct teachers on the issues concerning the program. Teachers stated that, it is only in the course of teaching that they come across students with visual impairment, an issue that prompt them to inquire more about them. Lack of skills in handling such special cases contributes to teachers giving little attention to these students with visual impairment as they concentrate on their sighted counterparts. .

The study found that teachers agreed with their head teachers on the issues concerning school financing the program. Out of 32, 21 (65.7%) agreed that the schools are not in a position to spend lots of money on purchasing the expensive gadgets that would serve hardly a third of the population of the students body. These views emanates from the point that innovation in education often fails not because of the lack of resources but that educational objectives are not well outlined. If the head teachers were sensitized on the objective of integrated educational program, they would not utter such words; rather they would have become creative in exploring possible sources of aiding the program rather than criticizing it.

According to all the 32 teachers that were interviewed during the study, students with visual impairment have problems in class during instruction time. Much of the problems they said arise from communication problems especially noting the fact that the teachers are not specially trained to handle such cases in class. They said that it is common, for instance, to see dissatisfaction in the face of students with visual impairment, but one cannot help in some of the situations when it is difficult to offer to the expected level of performance. Teachers also argued that the government does not motivate them by giving allowances on 'extra coughing'.

The respondents also disagreed with majority (56.7%) stating that some of the students with visual impairment had dropped out of school due to frustrations from difficulties they encounter. This implies that although students with visual impairment face challenges in an integrated education program, much of their challenges are academic in nature. They can be integrated well in the system. This is why 51% of the respondents disagreed with the statement that students with visual impairment have suffered more by being brought in an integrated system.

Implications to Research and Practice

This study is hoped to bring more insight and understanding on visual impairment as well as challenges faced by teachers teaching learners with visual impairment. Therefore, this would enable those parties involved in integration to establish appropriate interventions and programmes that can eventually benefit students with visual impairment, sighted and teachers. This study is also hoped to benefit teachers in the sense that they may gain more insight and understanding on the challenges that face them hence, address these challenges and establish ways and means to meet the needs of the students as well as their own needs in a more sufficient and adaptive manner.

Second, students with visual impairment can benefit from the results of this study in that, all the parties involved in running the integration programme can put more effort and develop a positive response that ensures the needs of the students are met. It is also hoped that policy makers would gain insight and understanding, leading to formulation of appropriate policies that ensure the needs of students in general are addressed within an integrated school. Last but not least, scholars and researchers would benefit from the results of this study whereby it may be used as a reference point as well as an entry point for other studies related to the topic and cover areas that this study may have not been able to address.

CONCLUSION

Most schools do not have specially trained teachers to handle students with visual impairment. Despite having no problems in terms of integrating and making friends with the sighted

counterparts, students with visual impairment were caught-up with time in class, needed more time for instruction and doing assignments compared to their sighted counterparts. Overall, it was found that students with visual impairment have benefited more by joining an integrated education program.

RECOMMENDATION

The curriculum should address all aspects of life and not just address the academic area without proper survival and social skills that would benefit the visually impaired learners both in the school and in the society there after.

The government should come up with strategies on how to sensitize the public on needs of the disabled persons and make the objectives of the program be known to teachers, students, school administrators and shareholders so that they can contribute to successful implementation of the program.

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