Assessment on Challenges Teachers Faced in Managing Learners with Selected Behavior Disorders in Primary Schools in Thika Sub-County, Kiambu County, Kenya

Gathua Joseph\textsuperscript{a}, Jessica Muthee\textsuperscript{a}, Margaret Murugami\textsuperscript{a}, Tesfu Tekle\textsuperscript{b}
\textsuperscript{a}Department of Special Needs Education, School of Education, Kenyatta University, P.O.Box 43844-00100, Nairobi, Kenya
\textsuperscript{b}Department of Educational Administration, College of Education, Eritrea Institute of Technology, P.O.Box 12676, Asmara, Eritrea

Corresponding author: Tesfu Tekle

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Abstract

The area under study up surge in problem behavior disorders among learners and this affect their academic performance. The purpose of this study was to assess the challenges teachers faced in their endeavors to manage learners with Emotional and Behavior Disorders (EBDs) in primary schools in Madaraka zone. The study objectives were to investigate challenges teachers faced in managing learners with selected behavior disorders, to confirm the presence of learners with conduct disorder, opposition defiant disorder and anxiety depression disorder in schools under study and to determine the performance of learners with selected disorders academically and in class behaviors. To describe the situation as it existed, the study used descriptive research design. Simple random sampling was done to select four schools and a sample size of 30 class seven teachers was selected through purposive sampling. Data from the research instruments was analyzed and presented descriptively. The study revealed that the most serious challenges the teachers faced in managing learners with EBDs was high enrolment/overcrowded classrooms and lack of specialized training. The study recommends that in-service training for teachers be done with a view of building capacity to face the challenges with the EBDs, that Kenya Institute of Curriculum Development to give guidelines on behavior disorder management.

KEYWORDS: Challenge, Emotional Behavior Disorder, Learner, Teacher

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1. Introduction

To begin with, people suffering from mental disorders have been reported across all the societies globally. Over centuries different terms have been used to describe them. Many of them, such as mental illness and psychopathology were originally coined to describe adult conditions. These terms have been regarded as too stigmatizing to apply to children with scholars preferring to use emotional disturbance seen as more appropriate and it appeared in the late 1900s (Reinert, 1972). During the same period, the label behaviorally disordered became popular, particularly with professionals in the field of special education. It was seen as the least stigmatizing label by some (Smith, Wood, &
Grimes, 1988).

In the $16^{th}$ and $17^{th}$ century, people with emotional and behavior disorders were perceived through the lenses of spiritualism. Individuals whose behavior seemed strange, odd, or vastly different from that of other people were considered as possessed by either evil or divine spirits. Thus, to hale from their evil or divine spirits people used to visit monks and priests. The monks and priests managed the people by casting out the demons through prayers or magic (Cullinan, 2007). In the $18^{th}$ and $19^{th}$ century a medical perspective was introduced to the people with EBDs. The idea that they were sick and distressed became deep-rooted. This gave birth to the application of scientific methods to study the behavior. In the $20^{th}$ century, more studies were carried out to establish how social norms affect behaviors. Scholars paid more attention to children who engaged in anti-social or criminal behavior with the aim of helping them. Strauss and Lehtinen (1947), published “Psychopathology and Education of the Brain Injured Child”, a seminal work that delineated the characteristics that interfere with children’s ability to learn (inattentiveness, hyperactivity, distractibility and violability) and provided the basis for the structured classroom model.

In the $21^{st}$ century, the focus has metamorphosed from source of the problem to how to deal with some of the challenges that face learners with EBDs which include prevention, placement and instruction which cut across all nations worldwide. Cullinan (2007) presented three forms of prevention approaches: universal, selective, and indicated. Universal prevention is applied to everyone in a large group (e.g., every student in the school). Selective prevention is conducted with a defined group at risk to develop EBDs because they have certain biological or psychosocial characteristics while indicated prevention is directed at individuals who show early signs of the condition and is designed to reduce the severity of the problem. Examples of universal prevention in schools are programs that teach good classroom and school management skills, pro-social competencies, conflict resolution and substance abuse prevention. Placement is the availability of appropriate placements for children and youth with EBDs (Cullinan 2007). Placements for children with disabilities would be served in the least restrictive environment that is; the placement closest to the general education classroom that best meet each child’s needs. Special educators have placed great emphasis on the importance of effective instruction as a prerequisite for sound behavior management (Kauffman, Mostert, Trent, & Hallahan, 2002; Kerr & Nelson, 2002).

In Africa, most countries do not have special educational programs for emotionally and behaviorally disturbed learners. A survey conducted by UNESCO (1985) indicated that only Kenya and Zimbabwe had programs for EBDs in Eastern and Southern Africa. In Kenya, there are no special classes purely for learners with EBDs. Learners with acute problem behaviors or are completely antisocial are placed in special transitional schools known as Approved schools. These rehabilitation centers serve as juvenile systems which receive learners who are referred by probation officers or courts. Hence, it is a very limited number of learners who get help compared to the many children in school settings who go unreported and therefore remain unattended. Therefore, it is essential that special classes for EBDs be established (Ndurumo, 1993).

Other important contributions towards the promotion of awareness in the development of EBD in Kenya include; the recommendations of enquiries of Education commission
reports of Kamuge (1988) and Koech (1998). They recommended the need to identify learners with special needs, promote awareness on who they are and what their needs entails. Moreover, the legal notice number 56/2001 (Republic of Kenya, 2001) outlawed the use of corporal punishment as a means of behavior management.

UNESCO (2005) did a research on challenges of implementation of free primary education in Kenya. The study findings showed that some of the challenges teachers faced include: lack of specialized training in handling learners with special needs education, lack of teaching learning resources, no recreational facilities, understaffed schools and over enrolment and congested classrooms in public primary schools.

It is important to note that all categories of disabilities have learners with EBDs. Therefore, requires the teachers to be well equipped with skills and knowledge necessary for handling all learners regardless of their disability in general education classroom. Notably, the school curriculum is meant for general education and therefore, not suitable for learners with EBDs, thus, teachers who are responsible for curriculum implementation should adapt curriculum and instructional methods to accommodate learners with EBDs (Scheurmann & Hall, 2008).

A reviewed literature (adopted from DSM-IV-TR, 2000) revealed that, there are three kinds of behavior disorders: (i) conduct disorder (CD), (ii) oppositional defiant disorder (ODD) and (iii) anxiety/depression disorder (ADD).

Conduct disorder condition displays a chronic, repetitive and persistent pattern of behaviors in which the basic rights of others or appropriate societal norms or rules are violated, as manifested by the presence of three (or more) of the following signs in the past twelve months, with at least one criteria being present in the last six months. These signs include: often bullies, threatens or intimidates others and often initiates physical fights, has used blunt object that can cause serious physical harm, has deliberately destroyed other pupils’ properties, often seek attention, likes showing off and is disruptive, often stay out at night despite parental prohibition and is often truant from school.

On the other hand oppositional defiant disorder condition displays a pattern of negativistic, hostile and defiant behaviors lasting at least six months, during which four or more of the following signs are present: Often loses temper and argues with adults, often defies or refuses to comply with adults’ requests/rules, is easily annoyed by others and deliberately annoys others, often blames others for his/her mistakes or behavior and is often angry, spiteful and vindictive.

Finally, anxiety-depression disorder is a condition whereby learners with EBDs manifest signs lasting at least six months, during which four or more of the following are present: are easily embarrassed or is often self-conscious, often hypersensitive, their feelings are easily hurt or feel worthless and inferior, often fearful, anxious or worried, often depressed, has excessive worries, has poor concentration, often avoid and postpone given task.

Study findings on learners with EBDs by Suran and Rizzo (1979) indicated that anxiety-withdrawn and emotionally disturbed learners experience problems in schools. The findings further concluded that learners experienced, tense, they were timid, shy, withdrawn and insecure and were lacking in self-confidence which affected their
academic performance. Some children fear making mistakes, fear speaking in class or reading aloud. Some learners have phobias- fear of school, examinations and of failure. These negative attributes affect or interfere with learning in that the child’s potentials are not fully utilized.

A research by Scheuermann and Hall, (2008) on academic achievement of learners with EBDs found that there is a correlation between poor academic achievement and behavioral disorders. Another relevant reference was a study done by the US Department of Education (2002) on learners with EBDs. It shows that learners with emotional and behavioral disorders experience the lowest level of academic performance and that fifty one percent drop out of school. It also indicated that there is a correlation between low intelligence and low achievement. Intelligence determines academic performance for learners with EBDs. For instance, the learning process is a cognitive activity that involves brain processes which can be affected by neurological or brain injuries. Other research studies also show that although learners with EBDs may include those who are gifted/talented and mentally retarded, majority of EBDs typically score low – range average on measure of intelligence (Vaughn, levy, Coleman and Bos, 2002). The research findings by Wagner and Davis (2006) found that learners with EBDs fared much worse than average in terms of grades, grade retention, dropout rate and absenteeism.

Social and emotional characteristics are also key elements that affect learners with EBDs as they interact with others in making and maintaining relationships. These skills are imparted to learners during their formative stages of life. Some of the social-emotional problems are attributed to parenting styles, pressures of life, cultural differences and hereditary factors (Kauffman, 2005). Every child has needs, they are: to belong, to understand right and wrong and need for independence. Emotional needs include: love and security, success and a feeling of importance. It is therefore, imperative to be cautious when labeling learners as either introverts or extroverts before assessment is done (Cullinan, 2007).

Every academic assignment is dependent on the learner’s ability to read and understand the concepts. There is correlation between language, speech development and academic performance (Roger-Adkinson, 2003). The mind of every child requires stimulation to develop. Teachers should plan active class work suitable for different abilities and interests of children. Language is vital for intellectual development therefore, children should be encouraged and stimulated to learn the language of instruction both at home and school. In addition, a research study by Rodger-Adkinson and Hooper (2003) found that learners with EBDs have deficit in pragmatism (the ability to use language in different context) and also in morphology (they use fewer words to form sentences).

In Madaraka zone, this research study focused on selected schools namely: Kianjau, Garrisa, Kisiwa and Karibaribi. They are all found within the extensive Kiandutu and Athena slums and they neighbor flowers/coffee plantation farms. Most of residents and by extension parents of these schools were casual workers in nearby coffee and horticultural farms. These schools were chosen based on data gathered from each school’s behavior inventory book commonly known as ‘black book’ where serious cases are recorded. Compared to other schools in the Sub- County, learners in schools under study had a very high rate of problematic behavior which occurred with increased frequency, consistency, intensity and duration far beyond expected level. For example,
Kianjau primary had most entries with an average of thirty (30) cases per month, followed by Garissa primary (25), Kisiwa primary (17) and Karibaribi primary (13). The analysis of behaviors from school records entries revealed that truancy and delinquency accounted for fifty percent of all cases, followed by defiance to authority fifteen percent, failure to complete school assignments ten percent, drug abuse six percent, fighting and vandalism five percent, lying and withdrawals five percent and others four percent.

The above information therefore was puzzling to the researchers and this necessitated a study to establish if there could be learners with EBDs in selected schools. To achieve this, the researchers provided a behavior assessment scale. In addition, zonal educational office records revealed that the selected schools were rated as the worst performers. For instance, in the year 2013, class seven end of the year examination showed that the zonal mean score was below the required 250 mark. The schools under study mean scores were as follow: Kianjau-151, Kisiwa-185, Karibaribi-208 and Garrisa- 211. If this trend continued the subsequent performance in class eight will be no better than the previous class of the year 2013 which was below pass mark. The Kenya Certificate Primary Education(KCPE) results indicated that none of the schools within the Madaraka zone attained a mean of 250 marks and that the four schools under study were ranked the bottom four schools in the entire Thika sub-county. These gloomy statistics no doubt indicated need to intervene in terms of behavior and in academic work. Therefore, the study was guided by the following research questions:

i) What are the challenges teachers faced in managing learners with behavior disorders in primary schools?
ii) Do we have learners with conduct disorder, opposition defiant disorder or anxiety-depression disorder in primary schools in Thika Sub-County?
iii) How do learners with selected behavior disorders behave in class and perform academically?

2. Objectives of the study

i) Investigate challenges teachers faced in managing learners with selected behavior disorders.
ii) Confirm the presence of learners with conduct disorder, opposition defiant disorder and anxiety depression disorder in schools under study.
iii) Determine the performance of learners with selected disorders academically and in class behaviors.

3. Materials and Methods

This study used descriptive research design. The major purpose for using descriptive research design was to describe the state of affairs as it existed within the schools under study (Orodho, 2003). The main data collection instrument was a semi-structured questionnaire. To substantiate the validity of the data collected through questionnaire and to secure relevant data for analysis a variety of documentary sources was also reviewed.

The study used multi-face ztedapproach to collect data in order to obtain credible results. The researchers constructed a questionnaire that was used to collect data on challenges teachers faced in their endeavors to manage learners with Emotional and Behavior Disorders in selected schools. The questionnaire was adapted to the Standardized Vanderbilt Assessment Scale (VAS) developed by Wolraich, (2003). It had two
components, Symptom assessment and impairment of performance (academic and class behavior). The study purposely dealt with selected disorders namely; conduct disorder, oppositional defiant disorder and anxiety depression disorder. The three disorders were purposively chosen based on behavior characteristic of learners in schools under study they displayed and recorded in behavior inventory books.

Purposive sampling technique was used to select class seven as the representative of all classes in each school and simple random sampling technique was used to select four (4) schools. Class seven was an ideal choice because it was not an examinable in national examination. The choice was based on facts derived from behavior inventory records from each school. Majority of recorded cases involved learners in class seven. The behavior characteristics displayed by learners leaned more onto selected behavior disorder in which this study was anchored on. The researchers made an opinion based on such glaringly facts to anchor the research on class seven. In this study a sample size of 30 class seven teachers from four selected public primary schools were participated.

The data collected through questionnaire was coded and computed manually. The study used descriptive analysis using frequency and proportions for quantitative data. The findings were presented in the form of tables and graphs.

4. Result and Discussion

4.1 Demographic profile of the teachers and learners

4.1.1 Teacher's gender, professional qualification and experience

Majority 18(60%) of the teachers were female while 12(40%) were male. From table 1, it was also evident that about half 12(40%) of the teachers were holders of certificate in education training, 10 (33%) diploma while 8 (27%) of them graduate. However, according to further information from the schools, it is important to note that although most of the teachers had diplomas and degrees in education, only 36% of the teachers were trained in special needs education. It would be logical therefore to conclude that most of the teachers had no specialized skills in handling learners with special educational needs. Moreover, more than three quarters of the teachers also indicated that there were functional guidance and counseling programs in their respective schools. Most of the teachers 22(73%), had teaching experience of more than 20 years while 8(27%) had below 20 years (Table 1). It would be logical to assume that teachers in selected schools had competencies and skills required to handle learners with EBDs having interacted with learners of different exceptionalities in such long period of time.

Table 1: Teacher’s gender, professional qualification and experience

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variables</th>
<th>N=30</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Teachers' gender</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Professional Qualification</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Certificates</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>40%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Diploma</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>33%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Graduate</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>27%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teachers experiences (years)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 1: Teacher’s gender, professional qualification and experience
4.1.2 Demographic profile of learners with selected behavior disorders

Teachers nominated 20 learners during screening process as most likely suspect for emotional and behavioral disorders. From table 2, it was evident that the age of learners who were screened by teachers ranged from 13 – 14 years for female and 13 – 16 year for male learners. Majority 14(70%) of learners who were nominated by their teachers for screening were male.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Gender</th>
<th>Age group</th>
<th>N=20</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td>13 – 14</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>30%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td>13 – 16</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>70%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Totals</td>
<td></td>
<td>20</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

4.2 Challenges teachers faced in managing learners with EBDs

To investigate the challenges teacher’s faced in managing learners with selected behavior disorders, the researchers provided a list of challenges from which teachers were requested to rate according to how they perceived the seriousness of each challenge. The rating was done on a three level scale namely: Serious, Not serious and Not sure.

4.2.1 Teachers ratings on challenges faced in managing learners with selected behavior disorders

According to table 3, lack of specialized training was rated serious by two thirds 20(67%) of the teachers while 7(23%) felt it was not serious challenge in behavior management and only 3(10%) were not sure. More than two third 22(73%) rated problem in identifying learners with EBDs as serious while only 3(10%) rated it not serious challenge and one sixth 5(17%) were not sure. Adaptation of curriculum and teaching methods had the highest number of responses among the list 12(40%) who were not sure if it was serious or not serious while 13(43%) and 5(17%) rated it as serious and not serious respectively. challenges such as school and environment management and lack of teaching/learning materials were rated as least challenging by two thirds of the teachers 20(67%) and 19(63%) respectively while about one third 9(30%) and 10(33%) of the teachers rated them as serious respectively and only 1(3%) for each item were not sure. Finally, majority 24(80%) of the teachers in selected schools indicated that high enrolment/overcrowding in classes was the most serious challenge teachers faced while 4(13%) of the teachers felt it was not serious and only 2(7%) were not sure about it.

This study finding concurs with the prior research study by UNESCO (2005) on challenges that faced the implementation of free primary education in Kenya. These study finding indicated that some of the challenges teachers faced included; lacking of specialized training; lacking of learning and recreational facilities, understaffed schools and over enrolment in public primary schools. However, contrary to this study finding was that teaching and learning resources was not a challenge.
Table 3: Teachers ratings on challenges faced in managing learners with selected behavior disorders

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Challenges</th>
<th>Serious</th>
<th>Not Sure</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>N</td>
<td>%</td>
<td>N</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lack of specialized training</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>67%</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Problem in identifying learners with EBDs</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>73%</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Adaptation of curriculum &amp; instructional methods</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>43%</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School &amp; class environment management</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>30%</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lack of teaching and learning resources</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>33%</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>High enrolment and over-crowding</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>80%</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Totals</td>
<td>98</td>
<td>54%</td>
<td>58</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

4.2.2 Teachers ways of overcoming challenges

Figure 1 shows teachers listed down eleven (11) ways of overcoming challenges they encountered in managing learners with EBDs in their respective schools. Accordingly, two third 20(67%) of the teachers indicated that they used guidance and counseling to overcome challenges posed by behavior problems in their schools. Collaborating with parents and referring learners to school administrator were equally ranked second by 10(33%) of the teachers while 9(30%) of the teachers felt that remedial work could help in overcoming challenges that faced teachers in disorders management. Moreover, figure 1 shows that teachers rated the following ways as least ways in overcoming challenges as arranged in descending order; seeking help from other teachers 7(23%), ignoring learners 6(20%), being empathetic, loving and caring 5(17%), use of positive reinforcement 5(17%), grouping learners into ability groups behavior analysis 3(10%) and referring learners for assessment 2(7%). The low ratings on behavior analysis and referral for assessment could be indicators that teachers in selected school maybe lacking adequate skills in applying behavior analysis as method of behavior management though research has shown that it is an effective strategy (Alberto, 2010). In addition, the study also revealed that teachers’ rated low referrals for assessment could be attributed to lack of specialized training in managing learners with special educational needs. Kamau (2005) indicated that most teachers do not refer learners they suspect to have EBDs for assessment though it is an important requirement for effective intervention program. The research result agrees with earlier findings that most teachers in selected schools were not trained in special needs education.
omination of learners with selected EBDs by their teachers

classroom behavior while 3(15%) were nominated based on social relationship.

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note that earlier research study by Kamau (2005) showed similar findings of discrepancy

2 (10%) were nominated based on academic problems and 8 (40%) based on social relationship.

It is worth to note that earlier research study by Kamau (2005) showed similar findings of discrepancy between nomination by teachers and research.

4.3 Presence of selected disorders in schools under study

Twenty learners were nominated as having behavior disorders and were referred to the researchers by class seven teachers. A further assessment was done using a standardized assessment scale. The assessment results showed that twelve (12) out of twenty (20) learners were experiencing emotional or behavioral disorders. In this study, the twelve (12) learners are referred to as research nominees. The eight (8) learners representing 40% did not meet the required set criteria and were therefore dropped out. It is worth to note that earlier research study by Kamau (2005) showed similar findings of discrepancy between nomination by teachers and research.

4.3.1 Criteria for nomination of learners with selected EBDs by their teachers

From the table 4, it was evident that after assessment, majority of the learners identified as having EBDs were boys 12(60%) as compared to girls 8(40%). Half 10(50%) of the learners were nominated based on academic problems, 7(35%) were selected based on classroom behavior while 3(15%) were nominated based on social relationship.

Table 4: Criteria for nomination of learners with selected EBDs by their teachers

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Criteria</th>
<th>Male %</th>
<th>Female %</th>
<th>Total %</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Academic performance</td>
<td>7 (35%)</td>
<td>3 (15%)</td>
<td>10 (50%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Classroom behavior</td>
<td>2 (10%)</td>
<td>1 (5%)</td>
<td>3 (15%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social relationship</td>
<td>3 (15%)</td>
<td>4 (20%)</td>
<td>7 (35%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>12 (60%)</td>
<td>8 (40%)</td>
<td>20 (100%)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

4.3.2 Distribution of disorders by gender

Table5 shows that the selected disorders namely conduct disorder; oppositional defiant and anxiety depression disorders were confirmed among learners in schools under study.
The study findings also indicated that conduct disorder 5(42%) and oppositional defiant disorder 2(16%) affected male learners only while anxiety depression disorder 5(42%) affected both genders. These findings validate earlier researcher assumption that there could be learners with emotional or behavior disorders in schools under study. The results also concur with prior study by Webber and Plotts (2008) whose findings indicated that male learners with EBDs tend to be at more risks of developing externalizing disorders than female learners who appears to be at greater risks for developing internalizing disorders. This study finding should guide teachers in the manner they handle female learners in terms of designing intervention programs geared towards preventing the occurrence of such disorders.

### Table 5: Distribution of disorders by gender

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type of Disorder</th>
<th>Gender</th>
<th>Total (N)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>Female</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Learners with conduct disorder</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Learners with oppositional defiant disorder</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Learners with anxiety depression disorder</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>9</strong></td>
<td><strong>3</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

#### 4.4 Learners with Selected Behavior Disorders and their Performance

To determine the academic and classroom behavior of learners with emotional or behavior disorders, the researchers asked the teachers to rate learners identified as having EBDs on how they perceived their performances in academic and classroom behaviors. Firstly, teachers nominated learners they had assessed as having behavior problems through observation, testing and interview.

##### 4.4.1 Teachers ratings on academic performance of learners with selected disorders

Table 6 indicates that only 1(1%) of the teachers felt that learners with EBDs could score above average in reading while 2(7%) of the teachers thought they can perform average and most 27(90%) of them responded that their performance in reading is less than average. On mathematics, majority 25(83%) of the teachers rate the learners as less than average while only 5(17%) of them responded they are average. Moreover, more than five sixth 27(90%) of the teachers felt that learners with EBDs performance is less than average in written expressions while 3(10%) rate them as average. Finally, on comprehension more than three quarters 24(80%) of the teachers indicated that learners with EBDsareless than average and 6(20%) rate them average while none of the teachers indicated learners are above average. In average most (86%) of the teachers rated the learners less than average while few (13%) felt average and only (1%) rated them more than average. This study finding concurs with earlier studies by Suran and Rizzo (1979); Wagner and Davis (2006) and Rodger-Adkinson and Hopper (2003) whose findings indicated that learners with EBDs are much worse than average in terms of grades and grade retention.
### Table 6: Teachers ratings on academic performance of learners with EBDs

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Subjects</th>
<th>Above average</th>
<th>Average</th>
<th>Less than average</th>
<th>Total (%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>N</td>
<td>%</td>
<td>N</td>
<td>%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reading</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3%</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mathematics</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>17%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Written expression</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Comprehension</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Totals</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1%</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>13%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

#### 4.4.2 Teachers ratings on class behavior of learners with EBDs

Figure 2 demonstrates teachers view on class behavior of learners with EBDs. Accordingly, more than two third 22(73%) of the teachers rated them as problematic and few 5(17%) rated them as average while only 3(10%) responded they are above average. On following directions, about two third 19(63%) of the teachers stated that they are problematic and about one third 9(30%) rated them as average while very few 2(7%) responded above average. More than half 16(53%) of the teachers felt that learners with EBDs are problematic in disrupting class while one third 10(33%) felt that they are average and few 4(13%) felt that they are above average. On the issue of assignment completion, more than two third 22(73%) of the teachers indicated that EBD learners are problematic while about a quarter 7(23%) indicated that they are average and only 1(3%) indicated above average. Finally, most 26(87%) of the teachers labeled the learners with EBDs are problematic in organizing skills and only 4(13%) labeled them as average while none above average. To conclude with, it was evident that only few (7%) responses indicated that learners with EBDs could score above average in all listed class behavior performances and about a quarter (23%) responses indicated they are average while almost three quarters (70%) of the responses indicated that learners with EBDs are problematic. The study finding corresponds with other research studies on social behaviors of learners with EBDs. For instance, the study conducted by Nelson et al., (2003) indicated that learners with EBDs had problems building and maintaining relationships. The study findings also concur with Mastropieri and Scruggs (2002) whose findings indicated that as much as half of the time allocated for instructions during the school day is lost due to learners off task behaviors, disruptive behaviors, interruptions and lack of teachers’ preparations. In nutshell, most of the positive behaviors among learners with EBDs were rated poorly.
The results in Table 7 obtained through computation of Pearson’s Product Moment Correlation Coefficient confirmed that there is significant correlation between student’s behavior and academic performance. The computed correlation coefficient (r= .938, p=.000) at α=0.01 level of statistical confidence indicates a marked and significant correlation between academic performance and class behavior. This is consistent with earlier research finding by Suran and Rizzo (1979); Wagner and Davis (2006) and Rodger-Adkinson and Hopper (2003).

**Figure 2: Teachers ratings on class behavior of learners with EBDs**

**4.4.3 Relationship between class behavior and academic performance**

The results in Table 7 obtained through computation of Pearson’s Product Moment Correlation Coefficient confirmed that there is significant correlation between student’s behavior and academic performance. The computed correlation coefficient (r= .938, p=.000) at α=0.01 level of statistical confidence indicates a marked and significant correlation between academic performance and class behavior. This is consistent with earlier research finding by Suran and Rizzo (1979); Wagner and Davis (2006) and Rodger-Adkinson and Hopper (2003).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Correlation</th>
<th>Performance</th>
<th>behavior</th>
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<tr>
<td>Pearson</td>
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<td>.938**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Correlation</td>
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<tr>
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<tr>
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<tr>
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<tr>
<td>N</td>
<td>293</td>
<td>293</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**5. Conclusion**

The conclusion of the findings of the study is summarized as per the research questions that led the study as follows:

- The study findings revealed that high enrolment/overcrowding in classes, problem in identifying learners with EBDs and lack of specialized training were serious challenges teachers faced in behavior management. Teachers were also unanimous that school environment strategies, adaptation of curriculum and instructional methods and lack of teaching-learning materials were not serious challenges.
- Learner’s demographic findings showed that some learners were suspected and selected as having selected disorders under study by their teachers; however, they did not participate in the study after actual assessment process was completed.
This difference in figure between teachers’ nomination and assessment was not uncommon as the same was reported in research study findings by Kamau (2005) on identification of gifted and talented learners in Kenya. In addition, the findings showed that the ratio between male and female learners of those identified as having selected EBDs was skewed towards male learners (3:1). Out of twelve learners identified as having selected EBDs, only three were female. Interestingly, none of the female learners had conduct and oppositional defiant disorders.

- The study findings also revealed that learners with EBDs had problems in mathematics, reading and written expression. Behaviorally, the study found out that learners with EBDs were problematic in relationship with their peers, following directions, completing school assignments and in organizing skills. In a nutshell, the study findings show that there is a relationship between academic performance and class behavior. A correlation coefficient (r) of 0.76 was established to show that there was a strong relation between class behavior and academic performance thus concurring with earlier study findings.

6. Recommendation

The findings from the study has revealed some implications, thus, the following recommendations may enable to minimize and to solve the challenges teachers faced during managing learners with EBDs.

- In-service training should be provided for teachers with a view of building capacity in data collection, recordings and statistical data analysis using various designs. This is crucial in that the results of such process would be credible and devoid of generalities.
- A legal policy framework that encourages primary schools to take responsibility of imparting critical thinking and problem solving skills to learners should be in place; creative skills and cross disciplinary thinking skills where learners apply knowledge, attitudes, behavior skills, across disciplines in appropriate and effective ways.
- Kenya Institute of Curriculum Development should come up with guidelines on effective ways of managing learners with behavior disorders.
- The study finding shows that there were learners with conduct disorder, oppositional defiant disorders and anxiety depression disorder in primary schools under study. The confirmation demands a paradigm shift in the manner the management of problematic learners should be handled.
- Research could also be conducted to find out if there are other disorders other than conduct disorder, oppositional defiant disorder and anxiety depression disorder in primary schools under study.
- Similar research can be replicated to other areas to find out if problems affecting schools under study can be generalized to other district schools in other counties.

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References


Scott, Foresman.


