

Korespondensi  
FRONTIERS IN EDUCATION

## Your manuscript submission - 630806



Frontiers Education Editorial Office

To me

63 Manuscript

18 Nov 2020 11:58 AM (GMT)



Dear Dr Imam

We are pleased to inform you that we have received the manuscript "The Classroom Impact of Trained Special Needs Education Teachers in Selected Schools: An Evaluation Study" to be considered for publication in Frontiers in Education, section Special Educational Needs.

You can access the review forum and track the progress of your manuscript using the following link:

<https://www.frontiersin.org/Journal/MySubmission.aspx?stage=100>

Your manuscript is now in the initial validation stage to determine its suitability for peer review. Should your manuscript be sent out for peer review, you will receive a notification once we receive the reports from reviewers and the interactive review forum is activated. You will then be able to read the review reports and exchange directly with the reviewers in the interactive review forum as well as submit a revised manuscript, if appropriate.

Best regards,

Your Frontiers in Education team

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[www.frontiersin.org](http://www.frontiersin.org)

Avenue du Tribunal Fédéral 34, 1005 Lausanne, Switzerland

Office T 41 21 510 17 60

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Imam Yuwono <imam.plb@ulm.ac.id>

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**Mats Granlund via Frontiers: Action needed: Interactive review for your manuscript has been activated - 630806**

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**Mats Granlund (Via FrontiersIn)** <noreply@frontiersin.org>  
"Mats Granlund (Via FrontiersIn)" <mats.granlund@ju.se>

26 Desember 2020 20.37Balas Ke:

Kepada: imam.plb@ulm.ac.idDear Dr

Imam,

The manuscript has an interesting focus but substantial revisions are needed before it can be considered for publication. Please read all the comments from reviews 1 and 2. It is very important that you can respond to all comments. It is especially important you described and show proof of ethical approval. As it is now no ethical approval has been described and commented on despite the fact that 30 students with special needs were interviewed. I like the authors to describe more in detail how informed consent was obtained from the 30 students. If no proof can be given the paper must be rejected

The interactive review of your manuscript "The Classroom Impact of Trained Special Needs Education Teachers in Selected Schools: An Evaluation Study" submitted to Frontiers in Education; section Special Educational Needs has now been activated.

The reviewers recommended that you make substantial amendments to your manuscript. Please respond within the next 21 days to all comments raised by the reviewers and editor in the online review forum. You can also submit a revised version of your manuscript at that time. We encourage you to submit your documents with tracked changes to highlight the revisions.

There can be more than one iteration between authors and reviewers, but only when all comments by each reviewer have been addressed successfully can the review be finalized.

To access the review forum and respond to the reviewers, please click on the following link:

<http://www.frontiersin.org/Review/EnterReviewForum.aspx?activationno=4b942bb2-6847-4cd8-a8f1-b33fb45f2463>

Journal: Frontiers in Education, section Special Educational NeedsArticle

type: Original Research

Manuscript title: The Classroom Impact of Trained Special Needs Education Teachers in Selected Schools: An Evaluation Study

Manuscript ID: 630806

Authors: Yuwono Imam, Okech Baptist John Submitted on:

18 Nov 2020

Interactive review started on: 26 Dec 2020

Please do not hesitate to contact us if you have any questions. Your timely response would be much appreciated. Note that if we do not hear from you by the revision deadline, the editorial office reserves the right to withdraw your manuscript from consideration for publication, as we cannot hold manuscripts in review without any updates from the authors.

With best regards,

Mats Granlund Associate

Editor, [www.frontiersin.org](http://www.frontiersin.org)

## Review Result 1

### EVALUATION

#### Q 1

Please summarize the main findings of the study.

**Reviewer 1** | 18 Dec 2020 | 22:40

#1

This manuscript describes an “evaluation study” of special needs education teachers, purporting to examine their impact on the learning experiences of LwDs and OSNs in their classrooms. The argument is made quite appropriately and convincingly that by integrating special needs students with “ordinary” learners, both will benefit in terms of social and emotional wellbeing. Inclusive educational practices are thus endorsed as leading to greater acceptance and less bias towards students with different learning abilities or behavioral styles. Teachers therefore play a crucial role in fostering inclusiveness, but often lack the specialized training, the ongoing support, and the resources they need in order to be effective in this role.

#### Q 2

Please highlight the limitations and strengths.

**Reviewer 1** | 18 Dec 2020 | 22:40

#1

#### Limitations:

While the assertion that special needs educators may themselves require special support is quite reasonable, it is important to also acknowledge that many of the recommendations being made actually pertain to all teachers, regardless of the composition of their classes. Similarly, all “ordinary students” (a term that is a bit disconcerting in itself) clearly have their own individual characteristics, needs, and educational requirements in order to succeed academically. Take, for example, the following phrase from P. 3: “because LwDs & OSNs all learn at their own paces”. The implication, found in numerous places throughout the manuscript, is that this is true ONLY of special needs students. It will be important for the authors to acknowledge this, either in a general caveat initially or whenever such instances arise. A similar example is found on P.4, as follows: “The authors further add that a comprehensive teacher training is always and [sic] important requirement for good classroom learning of LwDs & OSNs.” And on P.5: “...those who had long experience were comparatively performing much better than those with little experience.” Again, is it not the case that good teacher training and experience are essential for good classroom outcomes for all students?

It is not clear why this is referred to as an evaluation study, as there are no outcomes being reported, either for students, schools, teachers, or educational systems.

#### Strengths:

The authors draw attention to a number of important factors contributing to the lack of access to quality education for many LwDs & OSNs throughout the world. Adequate specialized training of teachers is crucial for this population, as well as availability of resources

designed to meet their special needs. The issue of overcrowding and therefore lack of individualized instruction is a serious one that deserves greater attention, particularly in communities and schools where classes are large and the number of trained teachers is relatively small. Therefore, qualitative research such as this can make a valuable contribution to our understanding of teachers' viewpoints, their frustrations, and the barriers they experience to providing quality education for their LwDs & OSNs.

Q 3

Please comment on the methods, results and data interpretation. If there are any objective errors, or if the conclusions are not supported, you should detail your concerns.

**Reviewer 1** | 18 Dec 2020 | 22:40

#1

Methodological questions:

Further clarification or expansion of the methods section is needed, addressing questions such as:

1. Grade levels
2. Locations (countries)
3. Class sizes
4. Mainstream classrooms or otherwise
5. Levels of teacher training
6. Years of teaching experience

Much of this could be presented concisely in a single graph providing demographics and other background information to guide the reader in understanding the methods used. It is important for potential replication of the study that these methodological details be provided.

Results section:

P.9: Among the most salient findings are that class size is a major concern, that teachers often feel overwhelmed by having special needs students in the classes (especially if they have not been properly trained in this area), and that pressures to complete the curriculum make these problems even more challenging. These are all important issues, but would again be better understood if the reader had more information about the backgrounds and training levels of these teachers, the average number of students in their care, etc.

P.10: The section on classroom environment is informative in its discussion of barriers to effective teaching and learning, but seems to point more to the impact of lack of resources than to teacher training. Clearly this is an important consideration, but it should be pointed out more clearly that this is a slightly different aspect of special needs education than the one being emphasized in this study.

Similarly, on P.11 the presentation of overcrowding and teacher-learner ratio raises very important points, but ones that could be better understood if the context of this research were known. In many nations around the world, a rapid increase in access to schooling in recent decades has far exceeded the availability of trained teachers. The resulting large class sizes and inability to individualize instruction for special needs are certainly problems in need of further study and improved policies, including expansion of higher education for teacher trainees. However, not all of these are necessarily universal concerns and may therefore not be generalizable beyond contexts similar to those studied here. On the other hand, this is not to minimize the point that large, crowded classes – wherever they are found – probably have a more severe and negative impact on the opportunities of special needs children to benefit from their educational environments.

Teachers' Qualifications – P.13: The following introductory sentences seem to state a truism that undoubtedly applies to all teachers, for all grade levels (including higher education), and regardless of the student composition of their classrooms. In order for these claims to be relevant to this particular manuscript, a better and more expanded case should be made regarding the implications specifically for LwDs and OSNs:

The researcher has observed that teachers who are more qualified understand learners' actions better than those who are less or not qualified at all. The researcher has observed that planning and presentation of qualified teachers are more interesting and appealing to learners, while on the contrary presentations of practitioners are found not to be appealing to learners.

The final sentence in this section (see below) is unclear. Why would “those who are upgrading their qualifications” not also struggle to maintain order, etc.?

Most of the practitioners, except those who are upgrading their qualifications; struggle to maintain order in the class and to help learners with learning difficulties.

Resources section P.13: Again, the questions here have to do with location, what part(s) of the world are being referred to, and why it is that some classrooms have resources but teachers are unable to use them (see 2nd quote).

“Most teachers are unable to practise inclusive education due to the lack of relevant resources...”

“The researcher has observed that most classes lack resources that can be used to enhance active learning during teaching and learning while few classes have some resources but they cannot use them.”

Conclusions (P.14 & P.15):

The study has established, among other things that teachers' long experience, qualification and continuous training and retraining are crucial factors for their effective roles they play in fostering successful provision of education for LwDs & OSNs.

Why should one assume that these qualifications and prior experiences are most required for effective teaching of LwDs & OSNs, rather than for all students at all levels?

The following sentences are not at all clear:

Relevance in the nature of the curriculum content learn out to be modified and redesign more often than not.

Based on the above findings, this study further concludes importance of assessment, whereby gathering information to monitor progress and make educational decisions to determine whether, or not barriers to learning for LwDs & OSNs are done on a regular basis.

Q 4

Check List

**Reviewer 1** | 18 Dec 2020 | 22:40

#1

Is the English language of sufficient quality?

- Yes

Is the quality of the figures and tables satisfactory?

- No

Does the reference list cover the relevant literature adequately and in an unbiased manner?

- Yes

Are the statistical methods valid and correctly applied? (e.g. sample size, choice of test)

- Not Applicable

Are the methods sufficiently documented to allow replication studies?

- No

Are the data underlying the study available in either the article, supplement, or deposited in a repository? (Sequence/expression data, protein/molecule characterizations, annotations, and taxonomy data are required to be deposited in public repositories prior to publication)

- Not Applicable

Does the study adhere to ethical standards including ethics committee approval and consent procedure?

No answer given.

Have standard biosecurity and institutional safety procedures been adhered to?

- Not Applicable

Q 5

Please provide your detailed review report to the editor and authors (including any comments on the Q4 Check List):

**Reviewer 1** | 18 Dec 2020 | 22:40

#1

The Abstract as written is itself indicative of some of the stylistic problems encountered in the manuscript.

Example of run-on sentence: (p. 3)

Balanced teacher training is the only way to go, according to McConkey and Bradley (2017), because LwDs & OSNs all learn at their own paces, thus, without taking this into consideration, the authors observe, all good efforts to promote inclusive schools can end up wasted.

Questions about Fig. 1:

The title of this figure, “ Conceptual framework for factors militating against a good classroom system”, seems misleading or poorly worded. Is the negative implication intended, or should the wording be something more like “...factors fostering a good classroom system”? In addition, it is not clear what this figure adds to the conceptual background provided; perhaps the modifications made by the authors have over-simplified the original content to a point where it does not seem to amplify or provide additional insights as to their research focus.

Literature Review:

This section opens with the following sentence (P. 5): “Teaching experience, among other factors have been identified by Bruwer and Heathel (2017).” This seems to be an incomplete thought – i.e., “have been identified” for what? Or, as important for...?

The remainder of this section requires substantial editing for grammar and clarity, as seen in a few of the following examples:

...teachers with more experience were crucial, because with all the confidence they had was vital in utilising the resources...



...Lunga (2015) advances Lunga's argument...

...developers to formulate the type of curriculum that is accessible and consumable by LwDs & OSNs at their respective pace, abilities and capabilities. as found that teachers felt that learners were not ready for curriculum and that they felt that the curriculum was inaccessible...

... Teachers, he believes has a responsibility of reminding the authorities concerned to cause enabling environment for implementation of such important policies if provision of education for LwDs & OSNs is embraced as a right for these categories of individuals in any society...

On P. 6, the name "Weyers" is sometimes spelled "Wevers", and twice appears as Wevers' when the apostrophe is not needed.

It is interesting, yet puzzling, that several other researchers have reported that teachers seem to feel they are helpless to remedy the problems they face in educating special needs children, that they are unable to improve their plight, or even that implementing appropriate policies is "problematic for reasons no one can explain" (P. 6). Perhaps the authors of this manuscript might attempt to explain these feelings of frustration or of limited success further in their own conclusions.

P.7: It would be helpful to identify the locations of some of the studies being reported in the literature review, such as in the following paragraph:

In Lunga (2015)'s some of the problems are that most schools share a common factor of having teachers who possess only low levels of qualification. All these arguments reflect the importance of teachers' training, as well as the accumulated working experiences already mentioned earlier.

In general, it is important not to over-generalize these findings, or to assume that they apply universally. Perhaps that is in fact the case, but there needs to be more evidence to verify this assertion if it is to be made. In some countries, special needs education – and preparation of those teachers – is given quite high priority as reflected in government and education ministry policies. The findings being reported here may not, therefore, be universally applicable.

## Review Result 2

### Reviewer 2

**Independent review report submitted:** 14 Dec 2020

**Interactive review activated:** 26 Dec 2020

You can post and reply to comments within this review forum here. On completion, ensure that you click on **Submit all comments** in order to alert the other participants to your changes.

AND

EVALUATION

Q 1

Please summarize the main findings of the study.

**Reviewer 2** | 14 Dec 2020 | 08:03

#1

Factors leading to effective fulfilment of the roles of participants as special teachers.

Q 2

Please highlight the limitations and strengths.

**Reviewer 2** | 14 Dec 2020 | 08:03

#1

Potentially this study could make an important contribution in the field. At the moment its contribution is blurred by the poor structure and poor analysis of methodology

Q 3

Please comment on the methods, results and data interpretation. If there are any objective errors, or if the conclusions are not supported, you should detail your concerns.

**Reviewer 2** | 14 Dec 2020 | 08:03

#1

The end of the literature search should be connected with the method.

Aim is missing

Research questions are missing.

Description of the research tool is missing.

One gets the idea that is a mixed methodology study with survey questionnaires and then in-depth interviews.

Overall is unclear and this is reflected in the results too.

Q 4

Check List

**Reviewer 2** | 14 Dec 2020 | 08:03

#1

Is the English language of sufficient quality?

- Yes

Is the quality of the figures and tables satisfactory?

- No

Does the reference list cover the relevant literature adequately and in an unbiased manner?

- Yes

Are the statistical methods valid and correctly applied? (e.g. sample size, choice of test)

- Not Applicable

Are the methods sufficiently documented to allow replication studies?

- No

Are the data underlying the study available in either the article, supplement, or deposited in a repository? (Sequence/expression data, protein/molecule characterizations, annotations, and taxonomy data are required to be deposited in public repositories prior to publication)

- No

Does the study adhere to ethical standards including ethics committee approval and consent procedure?

- Not Applicable

Have standard biosecurity and institutional safety procedures been adhered to?

- Not Applicable

Q 5

Please provide your detailed review report to the editor and authors (including any comments on the Q4 Check List):

**Reviewer 2** | 14 Dec 2020 | 08:03

#1

a. in the introduction the authors should clarify in detail what the terms LwDs & OSNs stand for.

Also the should change the titles e.g Factors influencing teachers instead of conceptualization

b. The should state the aim of the study and the research questions.

The research tool should be described

c. Language. They should avoid Is not very clear to me but is a mixed methodology study with survey questionnaires and then with interviews.

Language

Vaguity should be avoided. For example:

The study has established, among other things

Teaching experience, among other factors have been identified

Finally the authors should consider using widely accepted terms like severe or moderate learning diffuculties

Drewer (2016) suggests that that



Imam Yuwono <imam.plb@ulm.ac.id>

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## **Mats Granlund via Frontiers: Your delayed manuscript revision - 630806**

**Mats Granlund (Via FrontiersIn)** <noreply@frontiersin.org>

24 Januari 2021 20.55Balas Ke:

"Mats Granlund (Via FrontiersIn)" <mats.granlund@ju.se>

Kepada: imam.plb@ulm.ac.idDear Dr

Imam,

I am writing to inquire about the revisions for your manuscript "The Classroom Impact of Trained Special Needs Education Teachers in Selected Schools: An Evaluation Study", which are now overdue.

As of today, we have not received responses to reviewer 1. Could you please let me know as soon as possible when you are expecting to respond to the comments, and/or resubmit your manuscript?

Should you require a deadline extension for your resubmission, please do let us know by selecting "Request Extension" in the review forum, if you have not done so already. You may submit your revised manuscript with tracked changes to facilitate the review.

You can access the review forum using the following link:

<http://www.frontiersin.org/Review/EnterReviewForum.aspx?activationno=ba715909-5160-46a9-a7ef-a5420ba11c32&retab=1>

[Kutipan teks disembunyikan]

**REVIEWER 1:*****CORRECTIONS MATRIX***

| <b>S. No:</b> | <b>Points to be noted</b>                             | <b>Response</b>   |
|---------------|---|---|
| 1             | Use of the term “ordinary” being disconcerting        | Clarification given, p.3, 1 <sup>st</sup> para, 4 <sup>th</sup> line          |
| 2             | Use of the term “evaluation”                          | Changed to “find out..”   |
| 3             | Methodology – to be backed with a table               | This is done, p.11, Table 1   |
| 4             | Background to be improved                             | This is done, pp 2 - 5  |
| 5             | Number of students to provided                        | This is done, p.11  |
| 6             | Teachers’ qualification and experience to be provided | This is done, p.11  |
| 7             | Location of the research study area<br>Missing        | It is Uganda, p.11  |
| 8             | Fig. 1: Not clear                                     | Removed   |
| 9             | Other relevant corrections                            | Numerous corrections, pp:<br>1,2,3,4,5,6,7,8,9,10,11,12,13,14,18,19<br>and 20 |



Imam Yuwono <imam.plb@ulm.ac.id>

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**Mats Granlund via Frontiers: Your delayed manuscript revision - 630806**

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**Mats Granlund (Via FrontiersIn)** <noreply@frontiersin.org>  
Granlund (Via FrontiersIn)" <mats.granlund@ju.se>

24 Januari 2021 20.55Balas Ke: "Mats

Kepada: imam.plb@ulm.ac.idDear Dr Imam,

I am writing to inquire about the revisions for your manuscript "The Classroom Impact of Trained Special Needs Education Teachers in Selected Schools: An Evaluation Study", which are now overdue.

As of today, we have not received responses to reviewer 2. Could you please let me know as soon as possible when you are expecting to respond to the comments, and/or resubmit your manuscript?

Should you require a deadline extension for your resubmission, please do let us know by selecting "Request Extension" in the review forum, if you have not done so already. You may submit your revised manuscript with tracked changes to facilitate the review.

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<http://www.frontiersin.org/Review/EnterReviewForum.aspx?activationno=508ac2c0-3ed6-43f8-a3b6-367dadaa1025&retab=2>

I look forward to your reply. With best regards,  
Mats Granlund Associate Editor,  
[www.frontiersin.org](http://www.frontiersin.org)

Manuscript title: The Classroom Impact of Trained Special Needs Education Teachers in Selected Schools: An Evaluation Study  
Manuscript ID: 630806  
Authors: Yuwono Imam, Okech Baptist John  
Journal: Frontiers in Education, section Special Educational Needs Article type: Original Research

Submitted on: 18 Nov 2020  
Interactive review started on: 26 Dec 2020 Edited by: Mats Granlund

**REVIEWER 2:**

***CORRECTIONS MATRIX***

| <b>S. No:</b> | <b>Points to be noted</b>   | <b>Response</b>   |
|---------------|---|---|
| 1             | Aim of the study to be stated   | Was stated, as indicated on page (p.) 2 of the manuscript |
| 2             | Clarification of terminologies used: LwDs & OSNs, what they stand for | Learners with Disabilities. On p.2                        |
| 3             | Research questions missing  | They are provided. Pp. 4 and 5                            |
| 4             | Research Methods to be expanded                                       | This has been done. Pp.110,11,12 and 13                   |
| 5             | Widely accepted terminologies used                                    | Provided. Pp. 2 and 3                                     |
| 6             | Drewer (2016) suggest...  | Correction done. P. 8, 1 <sup>st</sup> para. line 14      |



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**Frontiers: Delayed manuscript revision**

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Imam Yuwono &lt;imam.plb@ulm.ac.id&gt;

8 Februari 2021 08:5

Kepada: Frontiers Education Editorial Office &lt;education.editorial.office@frontiersin.org&gt;, support@frontiersin.org, editorial.office@frontiersin.org, press@frontiersin.org

Dear Editorial Frontiers in Education.

The following revision content has been sent via the system but also receive via email.





We shall be happy to hear from you.

Sincerely,

Imam Yuwono

[Kutipan teks disambungkan]

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**4 lampiran** Reviewer1.A.Correction.Matrix\_Reviewer 1.docx  
17K Reviewer1.A.Correction.Matrix\_Reviewer 2.docx  
16K Reviewer B.Classroom.Impact.docx  
60K Reviewer 2.Classroom.Impact.docx  
54K

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**Frontiers: Delayed manuscript revision**

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Frontiers in Education - Peer Review <education.editorial.office@frontiersin.org>  
Kepada: "imam.pb@ulm.ac.id" <imam.pb@ulm.ac.id>

11 Februari 2021 20:36

Dear Dr Imam,

Thank you for your email regarding your manuscript below:

**The Classroom Impact of Trained Special Needs Education Teachers in Selected Schools: An Evaluation Study** [ID: 630806]

Online Review Forum: <http://review.frontiersin.org/review/630806/0/0>

Many thanks for submitting your revised manuscript in your responses to reviewers. However, we would also need you to upload this revised manuscript in the review forum: <http://review.frontiersin.org/review/630806/0/0>

Please click on the **Editor** tab, and click "Re-submit manuscript". You can then upload the revised files.

Many thanks, and I remain at disposal if you have any question.

Kind regards,  
Marie

—  
Marie Berset  
Review Operations Specialist

Editorial Office - Collaborative Peer Review Team  
Review Operations Manager: Judyta Sorokowska-Yammin

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**Frontiers: Delayed manuscript revision**

Frontiers in Education - Peer Review <education.editorial.office@frontiersin.org>

16 Februari 2021 16:43

Kepada: "imam.pb@ulm.ac.id" <imam.pb@ulm.ac.id>

Cc: "mats.grankund@ju.se" <mats.grankund@ju.se>

Dear Dr Imam,

I am contacting you in follow up to my previous email regarding your manuscript.

The Classroom Impact of Trained Special Needs Education Teachers in Selected Schools: An Evaluation Study [ID: 630886]

Online Review Forum: <http://review.frontiersin.org/review/630886/00>

Even though you attached your revised manuscript in both the reviewer tabs, I could not find your uploaded revised manuscript in the Review Forum. In light of this, could you please send me your latest manuscript files (both in Word and PDF) so I can make this update on your behalf?

I copy in the handling editor, Dr Mats Grankund, to keep informed.

Many thanks for your attention.

(Please see below information)

ref\_000561eR\_5004K4OGap.pdf

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**Frontiers: Delayed manuscript revision**

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Imam Yuwono <imam.yb@ulm.ac.id>  
Kepada: Frontiers in Education - Peer Review <education.editorial.office@frontiersin.org>

25 Februari 2021 07:5

Dear Maris,  
Herewith, I attach our revised manuscript both in word and pdf document. I will be happy for further processing to publication.


Sincerely,

Imam Yuwono  
([Follow me on Weibo](#))

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**2 lampiran**

 Finally Revised.Classroom.Impact.docx  
52K

 Finally Revised.Classroom.Impact.pdf  
257K

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**Frontiers: Delayed manuscript revision**

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Frontiers in Education - Peer Review <education.editorial.office@frontiersin.org>  
Kepada: "imam.plb@ulm.ac.id" <imam.plb@ulm.ac.id>  
Cc: "mats.granlund@ju.se" <mats.granlund@ju.se>

25 Februari 2021 14:00

Dear Dr Imam,

Many thanks for sending us your revised manuscript below. This is to confirm that I have now uploaded it in the review forum:

The Classroom Impact of Trained Special Needs Education Teachers in Selected Schools: An Evaluation Study [ID: 630806]  
Online Review Forum: <http://review.frontiersin.org/review/630806/1/0>

[Kutipan teks disembunyikan]

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**Frontiers: Congratulations! Your manuscript is accepted - 630806**

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Frontiers Education Editorial Office <education.editorial.office@frontiersin.org>  
Balas Ka: Frontiers Education Editorial Office <education.editorial.office@frontiersin.org>  
Kepala: imam.pb@ulm.ac.id

25 Februari 2021 15:31

Dear Dr Imam,

Frontiers Education Editorial Office has sent you a message. Please click 'Reply' to send a direct response.

I am pleased to inform you that your manuscript 'The Classroom Impact of Trained Special Needs Education Teachers in Selected Schools: An Evaluation Study' has been approved for production and accepted for publication in Frontiers in Education, section Special Educational Needs. A proof is being prepared for you to check before publication. A temporary version of the abstract is currently online but will be replaced with the full version when your article is published. Please do not communicate any changes until you receive your proof.

Manuscript title: The Classroom Impact of Trained Special Needs Education Teachers in Selected Schools: An Evaluation Study  
Journal: Frontiers in Education, section Special Educational Needs  
Article type: Original Research  
Authors: Yuvono Imam, Okech Baptist John  
Manuscript ID: 630806  
Edited by: Mats Granlund

Due to lockdown orders in various countries you may experience a delay in the production and publication of your article but please be assured that we are working to provide them as soon as possible and ask for your patience.

You can click [here](http://www.frontiersin.org/Review/EnterReviewForum.aspx?activationno=6d9a5370-4b15-4d8b-9efb-53ebb67415b8) to access the final review reports and manuscript.

As an author, it is important that you maintain your Frontiers research network (Loop) profile up to date, as your publication will be linked to your profile allowing you and your publications to be more discoverable. You can update profile pages (profile pictures, short bio, list of publications) using this link: <http://loop.frontiersin.org/people/>

Tell us what you think!

At Frontiers we are constantly trying to improve our Collaborative Review process and would like to get your feedback on how we did. Please complete our short 3-minute survey and we will donate \$1 to Enfants du Monde, a Swiss non-profit organization. [https://frontiers.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV\\_bqkYmRixBH5a76survey=author&aid=630806&uid=1145911](https://frontiers.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV_bqkYmRixBH5a76survey=author&aid=630806&uid=1145911)

Thank you very much for taking the time to share your thoughts.

Best regards,

Your Frontiers in Education team

Frontiers | Editorial Office - Collaborative Peer Review Team  
[www.frontiersin.org](http://www.frontiersin.org)  
Avenue du Tribunal Fédéral 34, 1095 Lausanne, Switzerland  
Office T 41 21 510 1793

For technical issues, please contact our IT Helpdesk ([support@frontiersin.org](mailto:support@frontiersin.org)) or visit our Frontiers Help Center ([zenDesk.frontiersin.org/hc/en-us](https://zenDesk.frontiersin.org/hc/en-us)).

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**Frontiers: Congratulations! Your manuscript is accepted - 630806**

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Imam Yuwono <imam.pb@ulm.ac.id>  
Kepada: Frontiers Education Editorial Office <education.editorial.office@frontiersin.org>

6 Maret 2021 06:15

Dear Editor,

When should expect the final copy of my paper for proofreading before publication? Because my coauthor's name is wrongly arranged.

Sincerely,  
Imam Yuwono

[Udipen tele disamburyilari]

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# The Classroom Impact of Trained Special Needs Education Teachers in Selected Schools: An Evaluation Study

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This study sought to find out factors that influence special needs education trained teachers' performance in class. It was conducted between January and June 2019, involving a target population which comprised 3 government universal primary schools, with a total of 94 teachers and 2,386 learners. Study samples were selected, involving special needs education teachers ( $N = 73$ ) and LwDs and OSNs ( $N = 30$ ). Purposive sampling method was used to choose the required samples. A descriptive study design, involving qualitative approach was used. Open ended questionnaires and interview guides were used for collecting data on the critical role that teachers play in supporting LwDs and OSNs who experience barriers to learning under inclusive setting. One of the findings reveals that class size poses a serious challenge to teachers who are not well trained when they have LwDs and OSNs in large classes. Another finding indicates that teachers face challenges with the way the curriculum is designed—posing challenge to them on how to best handle it. It is also found that teachers face challenge to manage the average class number (teacher-learner ratio). It is also found that class room environment, resources and implementation of policies on education for LwDs and OSNs have both direct and indirect influence on the teachers' impact in class. Basing on the findings, recommendations were made that: relevant authorities should increase support for teacher training and retraining for LwDs and OSNs. That curriculum modification should be done regularly. Classroom environments need regular improvement to be more disability friendly. Lastly, implementation of policies on disabilities and other special needs should be carried out on regular basis.

**Keywords:** classroom, impact, special needs, teacher education, special needs education

## INTRODUCTION

It was out of personal, as well as professional interest that the researchers opted to carry out this study. Being involved in teacher training for learners with disabilities (LwDs), others with special needs (OSNs) and ordinary learners, the researchers have always maintained strong belief in the efficacy of improvement in teaching and learning of all categories of learners.



Learners with disabilities are those individuals with impairments (sensory or bodily damage caused by diseases, genetic disorders, or injuries) that may comprise visual, hearing, physical, and intellectual impairments. These impairments can be acquired before, during or after birth. Each of the impairments can manifest itself in an individual in: mild, moderate or severe forms. An impairment leads to denial of an individual to perform specific function in a normal way. For example, an individual with a visual impairment loses the visual function—thus, such a person becomes disabled. Similarly, a person with hearing impairment is one who has lost the function of hearing. Society tends to refer to such people as disabled people. This kind of terminology rather sounds derogatory and discriminatory. Instead, such people are better referred to as persons with disabilities (PwDs). Impairment leads to disability, and if societal or self-negative attitude is added then an individual becomes handicapped. Nowadays, individuals should never be referred to as handicapped anywhere in this world. Special needs, on the other hand, is rather a wide concept covering different conditions, such as (impairments already mentioned), slow learning, being exceptionally talented and gifted, difficulties with spellings, communication, social emotional difficulties, behavioural problems, health problems (such as asthma, diabetes, sickle cell anaemia, and the like), being disadvantaged, living in streets, being homeless, being orphaned, to mention, but a few. The term “ordinary,” here may seem to be a bit disconcerting in itself, but it was felt better to use it than the term “normal” learners as often used in schools by virtually everybody.

It was also under the second context, whereby the demand for education consumption, especially in developing countries has been on sharp increase over the years without matching its supply, that educators like the researchers on this study got concerned and were compelled to continuously conduct a study of this nature. Consumption of education is a right for everybody no matter what ability or disability as enshrined in constitutions of many countries and also tackled under other international commitments (such as: United Nations [UN], 1948, 1993, 2006; United Nations Educational Scientific and Cultural Organisations [UNESCO], 1990, 1994; African Union [AF], 2000).

The third context under which the researchers were compelled to conduct this study was attributed to the examination-oriented syndrome of Ugandan education system. Uganda, like many other countries, set standard age of six (6) years as the school going age for young children. At the age of 6 years a child has to join Primary (P.)1, age 7 years should go to P.2, at 8 years P.3, at 9 years P.4, at 10 years P.5, at 11 years P.6, and at 12 years P.7. At the end of P.7 all children sit for a national examination, known as Primary Leaving Examinations (PLE). Successful candidates who get first class grades have the opportunity to join the so-called good secondary schools for four (4) years. At the end of this cycle the learners are again subjected to another national examination (referred to as the Ordinary Level examination, or Uganda Certificate of Education—UCE). Successful candidates at UCE will join higher secondary (Advanced Level) schools for two (2) years, after which they sit for A—Level (Uganda Advanced Certificate of Education—UACE). Successful candidates on these

examinations enter university to pursue undergraduate bachelor's degree courses, which range from three (3) to seven (7) years to graduate. Because of the tendency to repeat primary classes, some children leave primary education cycle when they have clocked anything between 13 and 14 years of age. Many of these students who get poor grades drop out of school. LwDs and OSNs have slim chance of doing very well in the PLE. It is a formidable task for categories of such learners to cope with the too much academic oriented type of learning that has been going on in Uganda—learners virtually being expected to produce academic results as if they are robots, while schools operate as if they are factories for producing facts. Some schools are graded as good, while others are labelled as poor schools. A school labelled good school is the type where, for instance, three hundred (300) children may register for PLE, go through rigorous coaching and when results are out, about 284 of them may pass in grade A, while only 6 may get strong grade B. This appears like education is treated as a sub-set of examination, and not the other way round. In light of all these and the related aspects in the background, the researchers deemed it necessary to carry out this study. The purpose (aim) of this study, therefore, was to find out factors that influence special needs education trained teachers' performance in class. Specific research questions posed were: (a) of what concern is class size to teachers who are not properly well trained when they have LwDs and OSNs in the large classes? (b) In what ways do teachers work to complete curriculum to satisfaction of all categories of learners? (c) How do teachers manage the average class number (teacher-learner ratio)? (d) In what ways does a class room environment pose a challenge to teachers' direct management of teaching of the different categories of learners under inclusive setting? (d) How does availability of resources concern teachers' performance in promoting teaching and learning?

## LITERATURE REVIEW

Whereas by the turn of the 1980s, fewer LwDs and OSNs attended ordinary schools, as asserted by Miles (2011), from the beginning of the 1990s, the state of affairs began to take a new trend. The reasons for these changes were, *inter alia*, the increased social awareness creation among the population the world over. Secondly, disability movement advocates took a centre stage to ensure that implementation of education for LwDs and OSNs alongside ordinary learners was given the priority it deserved (Mwangala, 2013). Some of the key roles played by the proponents of disabilities and other special needs, as well as the ordinary learners (Klibthong, 2015), included instilling social skills among LwDs and OSNs. The acquired skills, Klibthong adds, enabled LwDs and OSNs, as well as other ordinary learners to interact freely and to share all forms of activities with ease and comfort. In summary, Klibthong (2015) claims that teachers were contented with the way the development of interaction among the different categories of learners brought about significant support that later became beneficial for their own wellbeing.

In line with Klibthong (2015)'s observation, Lodge and Lynch (2004) had noted with interest, the high levels of

accepting attitudes displayed among ordinary learners toward their counterparts with disabilities and other special needs. In their view, Attfield and Williams (2013), point out the need to implement inclusion, because it is such a strong tool for cementing unity among LwDs and OSNs and their ordinary peers in schools. Through inclusion, Attfield and Williams believe that the existing discriminatory attitudes and all forms of prejudice and bias against LwDs and OSNs can get stamped out permanently in schools and in society generally. In light of this, Kotele (2010), Miles (2011), and Mnangu (2016) who perceive teachers to be the most valuable human resources available, suggest that they should be supported to promote inclusive practices in all schools. In order to enhance teachers' competence, Naicker (2006), for one, suggests that teachers have to be trained and retrained, for example, through in-service training if successful inclusive classroom implementation is to be achieved. Much as useful as it may be an effective teacher training should not majorly be focused on academic knowledge only, but it must be balanced with skills acquisition as well (Westwood, 2017). Balanced teacher training is the only way to go, according to McConkey and Bradley (2017), because LwDs and OSNs all learn at their own paces (so are ordinary learners), thus, without taking this into consideration, the authors observe, all good efforts to promote inclusive schools can end up wasted. McConkey and Bradley (2017), therefore, recommend that the contemporary teacher training programmes should be reviewed in order to empower teachers to be better equipped with the necessary skills that can help them to assess learning needs of each and every learner and be capable of managing a variety of individualised learning programmes (IEPs). Well trained teachers, according to Hamill et al. (2016), are those individuals who possess practical skills in instruction, communication, collaboration, alternative forms of evaluation, classroom management, conflict resolution, and those who know how to adapt curriculum and cooperative learning strategies. Hamill et al. (2016) suggest a number of helpful teaching/learning strategies, which, *inter alia*, include co-operative teaching/learning, IEP, the Socratic method, inquiry-based (discovery) learning, collaborative problem-solving, heterogeneous grouping, and differentiation. In support of Hamill et al. (2016) and Wedell (2016) affirms that effective teachers are those who understand a child's development and learning in addition to academic content. This argument supports the earlier view expressed by Attfield and Williams (2013), that for teachers to increase their confidence and skills, their training and development must encompass a wider scope than course attendance alone. The authors further add that a comprehensive teacher training is always an important requirement for good classroom learning of LwDs and OSNs (and for the ordinary learners too, although the authors do not mention this).

Teaching experience factors have been identified by Bruwer and Heathel (2017) as an important tool necessary for promoting an effective classroom performance for both teachers and learners of all categories. The authors investigated performance of teachers who were all trained but noted that those who had long experience were comparatively performing much better than those with little experience. Much as this argument

appears convincing, it should, however, be pointed out that such good experience equally works well for ordinary learners. The researchers, thus, noted that experience was one of the vital crucial factors that promotes successful learning of LwDs and OSNs. The findings, according to Bruwer and Heathel (2017), proved that however much a school was well equipped with all types of necessary teaching/learning resources, it still needed teachers with more experience on the ground. That, such teachers were needed as they had the ability and skills in utilising resources to stimulate effective and successful learning among LwDs and OSNs and ordinary learners in schools. Besides teachers' good experiences in classroom, Khan (2011) noted another area where teachers' roles were important in supporting successful learning of LwDs and OSNs. This was to do with identification and utilisation of curriculum that were consumable by different categories of LwDs and OSNs. Lunga (2015) advances Khan's argument and concern by proposing that teachers should work with curriculum designers and developers to formulate the type of curriculum that is accessible and consumable by LwDs and OSNs and ordinary learners at their respective pace, abilities and capabilities. Drewer (2016) supports Lunga's point of view on teachers' roles, by calling upon other professionals who are engaged in curriculum development to be flexible and supportive to teachers in development curriculum that is flexible and realistic to LwDs and OSNs, as well as ordinary learners. In conclusion, Drewer (2016) suggests that teachers should always work with other experts and guide them to design and develop curriculum that is adaptable to the needs of LwDs and OSNs. Okwano (2016), for one, dwells on the policy framework for LwDs and OSNs. Okwang believes that some governments stop at formulating policies on the provision of education for LwDs and OSNs, and that they do little to enforce implementation of such policies. Teachers, Okwang, believes, have a responsibility to remind the relevant authorities to enforce enabling environment for implementation of such important policies. In supporting Okwang, Jarvis (2016) points out that lack of action taken to implement education for LwDs and OSNs means that most young children are rendered vulnerable to multiple and intersecting risks and danger that profoundly affect their growth and development.

When Weyers (2016) focused a study on the ecological aspects that influenced implementation of inclusive education in mainstream primary schools in the Eastern Cape, South Africa, the findings revealed that implementation was attributed to the entire ecological system of education in that country. Weyers noted that the systems were not supportive of one another for the success of implementation of inclusive education, pointing out that no system could stand alone, and that not even teachers could do much to improve the situation. Other observations that Weyers (2016) noted, were that classes were not very accommodative and user-friendly for learners who experienced barriers to learning. Here, Weyers further revealed that there was lack of structural modification among participating schools to accommodate the needs of learners with limited mobility. Against this background, it was further noted that LwDs and OSNs were excluded from aspects of school life and that teachers' roles to help improve the situation of such learners were severely

restricted by the circumstances. This, according to Weyers, limited the learners' full participation in classroom activities, and that they were thereby denied the opportunity of developing optimally. Teachers were, therefore noted, according to Weyers, to be unable to help improve the situation. In Uganda, such a dilemma for teachers' presumed failure can be attributed to policy conflicts, so to say. Uganda is currently one of the leading countries in the eastern, central and southern African regions on policies for LwDs and OSNs. As mentioned earlier, well trained teachers for LwDs and OSNs, due to examination-oriented type of education in the country may not find it possible to provide good quality of child centred teaching/learning. In Uganda there are some teachers who are recognised as good teachers by parents, school administrators and politicians when they produce learners who score as many grade A passes at PLE as possible. For that reason, teachers are always seen on their toes, preparing learners for perfect PLE performance. Individualised Educational Planning (IEP) knowledge and skills that teachers acquire when they obtain higher qualifications in teaching LwDs and OSNs is something that they have to put aside for a while if they are to survive the competition of coaching learners for super grade A performance at the end of the primary education system cycle.

Without adequate orientation, Kurawa (2015) points out that teachers would not do much to support and provide assistance to their LwDs and OSNs; and that they also need instructional and technical skills to work with learners' diverse needs. In Lunga (2015)'s view, some of the problems are that most schools share a common factor of having teachers who possess only low levels of qualification. All these arguments reflect the importance of teachers' training, as well as the accumulated working experiences already mentioned earlier. In the next section, empirical search, meant to solicit data from practical point of view is presented. This is based on the research purpose and the relevant research questions formulated for the study.

## METHODOLOGY

The purpose (aim) of the study was to find out factors that influence special needs education trained teachers' performance in class. The study conducted between January and June 2019, adopted a descriptive study design and used qualitative approaches in sampling, data collection and data analysis. The study participants were 103, comprising 73 special needs teachers and 30 pupils with disabilities, who voluntarily participated in the study. The sample is as shown in **Table 1**. The target population consisted of 3 government universal primary schools selected from Kampala, Wakiso and Mukono. There were 94 teachers and 2,386 learners in the identified schools. For ethical purpose, the identified schools were code named as A, B, and C. The study covered participants who were aged between 9 and 14 years.

Purposive sampling technique was used to select the required samples for teachers and learners. As noted in **Table 1**, methodological aspects address questions such as grade levels, location (namely: Kampala, Wakiso, and Mukono in Uganda), class size, inclusive classrooms, levels of teacher training and years of teaching experience. It may appear as if the Teacher:

Learner ration is around 1:30, as is seen in the table. This would only be possible if each of the classes were to be divided and shared at the time of teaching. Instead, each teacher has to teach the entire class each time, as indicated in each of the brackets. Take for example, if in School A, a teacher of P.7 is to teach a specific subject, he/she has to face the entire (202), instead of 29 learners. Thus, the volume of workload becomes cumbersome. These various aspects are included for they influence the way participants provide responses for this study.

Seventy-three (73) open ended questionnaires were distributed to special needs teachers, while interviews were conducted with the identified 30 pupils with disabilities and other special needs. The questionnaires, accompanied with cover letters were delivered to the prospective participants who filled them in and returned to the researchers. After gathering the questionnaires filled in by the participants, the researchers embarked on the in-depth interviews in the selected schools. Before each interview session consent forms were signed and given back to the interviewer. These were all focused on teachers' qualifications, teaching experiences, teaching methods, the classroom environment, the relevant policy framework on the provision of education for LwDs and OSNs.

## RESEARCH INSTRUMENTS

As noted above, a mixture of instruments was used, and they comprised open ended questionnaires on one hand, and interview guides, on the other hand. Each of the instruments focused on the research questions, which are reproduced here, for the attention of the reader as follows: (a) the concern on class size to teachers who are not properly been well trained when they have LwDs and OSNs in the large classes (b) the ways by which teachers use to complete curriculum for the satisfaction of all categories of learners (c) how teachers manage the average class number (teacher-learner ratio) (d) the ways by which class room environment pose a challenge to teachers' direct management of all categories of learners under inclusive setting (d) how availability of resources concern teachers' performance in promoting teaching and learning.

## DATA ANALYSIS

Content data analysis involved identification of themes and sub-themes, and categorisation of emerging themes where applicable. Analysis also involved narrations and direct quotes where necessary. In short, data was analysed using content and thematic analysis.

## ETHICAL ISSUES

For ethical purpose, the identified schools were code named as A, B, and C. The study involved thirty (30) learners aged between 9 and 14 years, who were interviewed during the data collection. The consent of this category of participants was sought prior to commencement of each of the interview sessions. A consent

**TABLE 1** | Study sample.

| Trained special needs education teachers (N = 73) |           |                               |           |                 |            |                                   |              |
|---|-----------|-------------------------------|-----------|-----------------|------------|-----------------------------------|--------------|
| Levels of training/Qualification                  |           | Years of teaching experiences |           | Class size      |            | Location and type of school       |              |
| Degree  | 22        | 12 years and above            | 11        | <b>School A</b> |            | Kampala (Uganda) Inclusive School |              |
|   |           |                               |           | P.7             | 202        |                                   |              |
|   |           |                               |           | P.6             | 209        |                                   |              |
|   |           |                               |           | P.5             | 217        |                                   |              |
|   |           |                               |           | P.4             | 226        |                                   |              |
| <b>Total</b>                                      |           | <b>854</b>                    |           |                 |            |                                   |              |
| Diploma   | 29        | 9–11 years                    | 25        | <b>School B</b> |            | Wakiso (Uganda) Inclusive school  |              |
|   |           |                               |           | P.7             | 187        |                                   |              |
|   |           |                               |           | P.6             | 192        |                                   |              |
|   |           |                               |           | P.5             | 207        |                                   |              |
|   |           |                               |           | P.4             | 213        |                                   |              |
| <b>Total</b>                                      |           | <b>799</b>                    |           |                 |            |                                   |              |
| Grade three (III)                                 | 32        | 5–8 years                     | 21        | <b>School C</b> |            | Mukono (Uganda) Inclusive School  |              |
|   |           | 1–4 years                     | 10        | P.7             | 164        |                                   |              |
|   |           |                               |           | P.6             | 178        |                                   |              |
|   |           |                               |           | P.5             | 193        |                                   |              |
|   |           |                               |           | P.4             | 198        |                                   |              |
| <b>Total</b>                                      |           | <b>733</b>                    |           |                 |            |                                   |              |
| <b>Total</b>                                      |           | <b>Total</b>                  |           | <b>Total</b>    |            | <b>Grand Total</b>                |              |
|   | <b>73</b> |                               | <b>73</b> |                 | <b>733</b> |                                   | <b>2,386</b> |

| School A | Grade level  | Number of learners | Number of LwDs and OSNs | Number of teachers | Teacher–learners ratio |
|----------|--------------|--------------------|-------------------------|--------------------|------------------------|
| School A | P.7          | 202                | 2                       | 7                  | 1:29 (202)             |
|          | P.6          | 209                | 3                       | 6                  | 1:34 (209)             |
|          | P.5          | 217                | 3                       | 6                  | 1:36 (217)             |
|          | P.4          | 226                | 3                       | 6                  | 1:38 (226)             |
|          | <b>Total</b> | <b>854</b>         |                         |                    |                        |
| School B | P.7          | 187                | 2                       | 6                  | 1:31 (187)             |
|          | P.6          | 192                | 3                       | 6                  | 1:32 (192)             |
|          | P.5          | 207                | 3                       | 6                  | 1:35 (207)             |
|          | P.4          | 213                | 3                       | 6                  | 1:36 (213)             |
|          | <b>Total</b> | <b>799</b>         |                         |                    |                        |
| School C | P.7          | 164                | 1                       | 6                  | 1:27 (164)             |
|          | P.6          | 178                | 1                       | 6                  | 1:30 (178)             |
|          | P.5          | 193                | 3                       | 6                  | 1:32 (193)             |
|          | P.4          | 198                | 3                       | 6                  | 1:33 (198)             |
|          | <b>Total</b> | <b>733</b>         | <b>30</b>               | <b>73</b>          |                        |

Primary data.

form was given to each of them to sign, with a reassurance that their names and whatever information they were to give would remain confidential. They were also reassured that neither their photographs would be taken by the researchers, nor recorded voices be revealed to the third party. \*The signed consent form can be provided on request by the editor of this journal.

## FINDINGS

The findings of the study reflected similar views, as well as divergent views expressed by the participants, as well as the

issues noted through observations. Findings emerged, revealing the importance of teachers’ experience, the methods they use for delivery, the pressure they go through to complete the nature of curriculum and its relevance to LwDs and OSNs, the importance of policies on the provision of education for LwDs and OSNs, the class room environment, and generally the key roles played by teachers in the implementation of inclusive education for LwDs and OSNs—reflecting how vital teachers’ training and experience are. All participants in this study stressed the fact that every child was different and therefore there ought to be options available to best suit the needs of learners with special needs. For some families the situation may need to

change, but ultimately the important thing is to have the best suitable option.

This study found out that there was a definite emphasis and importance placed on the classroom development of children with intellectual disabilities. All participants identified social learning and social awareness as positive aspects of inclusive education settings. It is not only children with disabilities that benefit socially, but all ordinary children in the school do benefit. From discussions on children's social interaction, an emphasis on the caring nature exhibited by primary school children toward pupils with special educational needs became evident (Nolan, 2011). Teachers identified this to be particularly so, as children grew older and the gap widened socially between children with disabilities and their peers. *"The gap is going to get bigger and bigger, between her and the rest of the class, but that happens with all children with disabilities"* Class size is a massive issue. *"It just goes without saying, if you have a big class of thirty-odd children and you have somebody with special needs, either that child is going to lose out or the rest of the class are going to, you know someone's losing out, because you can't get to everything"* (Teacher).

Teachers admitted to feeling overwhelmed or anxious in some cases. *"I really felt at sea I have to say, in September, because a child with particular special needs was coming into class. There are no guidelines, there's no...there's nothing. You are just, you are just there and you have to figure it out yourself nearly"* (Teacher).

The challenge in the selected schools is that most of the participants (teachers) were not trained to teach in inclusive classrooms or how to practise. A participant said: *"It is important that all children must learn together so that they feel appreciated, but the problem is that we are not trained to teach learners with disabilities. If we can be trained and be supplied with resources that will assist learners such as Braille for learners who cannot see clearly, we will be able to practice inclusive education without struggling."* This indicates that proper training for practising teachers is needed.

## TIME TABLING AND CLASSROOM SETTING

Findings have revealed that the most significant barriers to learning for learners in the curriculum were the pace of teaching and the time available for completing the curriculum. A participant was concerned about learners who could not see clearly, and even though teachers always made them sit where they could see, it was difficult for learners because teachers started writing from the top of the board and the hand writings were too small to be seen and recognised the learners.: *"I always let learners who cannot see clearly sit in front chairs so that they can see what is written on the chalkboard. Sometimes I have to enlarge copies of the text for those learners so that they can read or copy from big printed activities."*

Kibuuka (2017) advises that visual aids and enlarged print materials should be made available to all learners to learn properly at schools so that the needs of every learner are met and barriers to learning can be addressed.

A participant also mentioned: *"The time that is allocated for daily routine disadvantages some learners in completing their activities because we have to move from one activity to another without stopping. Sometimes I cannot cover curriculum for the term because I have to make intervention for learners who experience challenges."* According to Nsamenang (2011) and reaffirmed by Kabumba (2017), different activities inside the classroom should take place simultaneously, not one after the other so that learners are able to choose the activities they want to participate in and they should decide for themselves the order in which they will tackle the different activities.

## CLASSROOM ENVIRONMENT AND SPACE

A participant pointed this out: *"learners' rotate in writing the activities because there is few furniture and lack of space."* This indicates that teachers spend more time in completing activities with learners because they have to rotate in using furniture for writing. Based on the observations, teachers could have used different strategies, such as oral work or practised the activities outside the classroom.

A participant noted that classes were overcrowded; some learners could be ignored because teachers would not identify them. Mwangala (2013) asserts that teacher-learner ratio and group sizes are assumed to be important because as the number of children increases, teachers' ability to individualise attention to children decreases, and managing large numbers of children can be stressful for even the most sensitive and knowledgeable teacher. Learners do not sit comfortably in class because space is too limited and they do not have enough chairs. A participant said: *"I think in school inclusive education is hindered by overcrowding and lack of space."*

Another participant added: *"If learners are more than 40 in class, it is difficult to attend to individual problems because we do not have enough time to do so."*

The size of the classroom and number of learners in the class has an impact on monitoring and supporting learners. It is important for learners to be supported by teachers in class so that they can gain confidence of learning. Miles (2011) noted that overcrowding had also been identified as another factor that affects the practices of inclusive education. Overcrowding created a challenge for teachers to be able to identify and attend to learners who experienced challenges in class. In most cases learners with learning difficulties are ignored due to overcrowding and lack of space. It is important for all learners to be accommodated in teaching-learning classrooms.

## CLASSROOM MANAGEMENT

Findings have revealed that some learners need the teachers' attention in order to focus to their work and complete successfully. A respondent noted: *"we, as teachers sometimes rush children in answering questions instead of giving them time to respond, this creates frustrations and fear in them."* According to

Westwood (2017), teachers should vary paces when speaking to learners can, by so doing enable them to comprehend what is being said. That, teachers should understand that not all activities are suitable for the; different categories of learners with special needs. The researcher observed how teachers and practitioners were administering their activities and assessments in classes. This observation is in line with Kibria (2005), who is of the view that planned activities should always be of relevance and stimulating. That learning activities should be of interest to learners and that they should be developed in ways that learners find them enjoyable.

## TEACHERS' EXPERIENCES AND QUALIFICATIONS

The researchers have observed that teachers who are more qualified understand learners' actions better than those who are less or not qualified. As noted earlier, in Uganda education is so examination oriented. In light of that a well-qualified and experienced teacher will have the knowledge and belief that education is not merely passing examinations very highly—that education should be planned to shape a learner's better future. That learners, be it they are ordinary or, those with disabilities and other special needs must not be turned into machines for cramming facts and regurgitate them for purpose of passing national examinations in grade A all the time. The researchers have observed that planning and presentation of qualified teachers are more interesting and appealing to learners, while on the contrary presentations of practitioners are found not to be appealing to learners. Most of the practitioners, except those who are upgrading their qualifications; struggle to maintain order in the class and to help learners with learning difficulties. On completion of their courses, the upgraders exhibit knowledge and skills that enable them maintain order in class. That, before attaining new qualifications they would lack the necessary skills, so they would have to struggle to put things right, as such.

## RESOURCES

Resources enhance learners' understanding and grasping of the content of what is being taught while allowing them not to forget what they have learnt. Resources that will enhance learners' knowledge should be prioritised in schools so that learners are provided with the opportunity of learning and gaining understanding of a concept with ease. Availability of resources in schools contributes positively to the teaching and learning of different learners in the classroom if the resources are properly utilised. Most teachers are unable to practise inclusive education due to lack of relevant resources that enhance teaching and learning.

The developing countries are the ones that are most affected on this. Developed countries have virtually all the resources they need to support their education provision. According to Kristensen et al. (2003), identification of resources and assets

in the children's environment does not only help to provide a basis for learning opportunity and participation, but is important for early childhood education. The researchers have observed that most classes, especially those in developing countries lack resources that can be utilised to enhance active learning during teaching and learning while few classes have some resources but they cannot use them. Kotele (2010) noted that lack of resources prevents teachers/practitioners from differentiating activities to accommodate different learning abilities. Other findings have revealed that in some selected schools, some classes do not have enough furniture for all categories of learners, and that some learners are inconvenienced and disadvantaged. Findings have revealed that lack of infrastructures affects the practices of inclusive education. Foundation phase classes should have enough space for learners' movement and for putting different resources in different spaces as pointed out by a participant.

The participant said: *"I think in some schools' effective implementation of activities is hindered by overcrowding and lack of space, our classes are not user friendly, for example, if a child uses a wheelchair, he/she would not be able to move around or go to the toilet, because even our toilets are not suitable for them."* The sizes of the classrooms should allow both teachers and learners to move freely without disturbing or hurting each other. The researchers have observed that practical objects are very important for enhancing learners' understanding and emphasising what is being taught so that they do not forget what they have learnt. The researchers have observed that learners could easily identify objects from posters and mention them. This is because the learners will have first seen such posters, touched them while teachers were teaching.

The above observations are in line with Klibthong (2015), who is of the view that unsuitable school buildings are demotivating factors for a successful inclusion of LwDs and OSNs.

## CONCLUSION

The study has concluded that teachers' long experience, qualification and continuous training and retraining are crucial factors for effective roles they play in fostering successful provision of education for LwDs and OSNs, as well as for ordinary learners. As such, it is recommended that relevant authorities should be informed of the need to channel resources for improvement in this area. One other important conclusion is that the manner in which teachers deliver curriculum content to learners is crucial and that where there is weakness, a correction ought to be done without delay. In this regard the authorities in education in a country like Uganda should redesign curriculum which is flexible and consumable by all categories of learners, and move away from the current rigid examination-oriented curriculum. Another conclusion is that formulation of good educational policies is not helpful if such policies are not effectively implemented. It is also concluded that classroom environment is a crucial matter. Last, but not least, it is concluded that classroom environment and relevant resources contribute both directly and indirectly to teachers' effective performance in

the promotion of successful learning for all categories of learners. It is therefore recommended that the relevant authorities be informed of the need to improve support in these areas.

## DATA AVAILABILITY STATEMENT

The original contributions presented in the study are included in the article/supplementary material, further inquiries can be directed to the corresponding author/s.

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Both authors listed have made a substantial, direct and intellectual contribution to the work, and approved it for publication.

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