

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

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

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5

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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 classroom environment pose a challenge to teachers' direct management of teaching of the different categories of learners under inclusive setting? (e) 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. Okwango (2016), for one, dwells on the policy framework for LwDs and OSNs. Okwango 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, Okwango, believes, have a responsibility to remind the relevant authorities to enforce enabling environment for implementation of such important policies. In supporting Okwango, 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.

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	School A Kampala (Uganda) Inclusive School
				P.7 202
				P.6 209
				P.5 217
				P.4 226
				Total 854
Diploma	29	9–11 years	25	School B Wakiso (Uganda) Inclusive school
				P.7 187
				P.6 192
				P.5 207
				P.4 213
				Total 799
Grade three (III)	32	5–8 years	21	School C Mukono (Uganda) Inclusive School
				P.7 164
				P.6 178
		1–4 years	10	P.5 193
				P.4 198
Total	73	Total	73	Total 733
				Grand Total 2,386

  

School A	Grade level	Number of learners	Number of LwDs and OSNs	Number of teachers	Teacher—learners ratio
	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)
	Total	854			
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)
	Total	799			
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)
	Total	733	30	73	

*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 to learners' 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 learners' needs 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.

**Conflict of Interest:** The authors declare that the research was conducted in the absence of any commercial or financial relationships that could be construed as a potential conflict of interest.

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## AUTHOR CONTRIBUTIONS

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

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