

**STRATEGIES USED TO COUNTER CHALLENGES FACED BY THE HEARING
IMPAIRED LEARNERS IN PUBLIC PRIMARY SCHOOLS IN LAARE DIVISION**

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ABSTRACT

Over the years there has been an increase in enrolment of children who are disabled in Kenyan Public schools due to the shortage of special schools and the current trend towards educating these children in a normal and less restrictive environment. That is inclusive program. Inclusion maintains an open door to all learners regardless of abilities. However, how much inclusion is quite an issue. In inclusive settings in Laare Division of Igembe North District, Learners with hearing impairment face various challenges such as insufficient / lack of material resources, curriculum barriers and discriminative cultural factors among others. This study investigated the strategies used to counter challenges faced by the hearing impaired learners in public primary schools in Laare Division. This study had the following objectives: To establish teaching and learning resources for the hearing impaired learners available in public primary schools; To find out student-teacher ratio in public primary schools; To establish the level of government and community involvement towards learning of the hearing impaired learners in public primary schools; and to find out instructional interventions for the hearing impaired learners in public primary schools. In this study, a survey research design was adopted. The target population for the study was 500 teachers and 25 head teachers in Laare Division. Simple random technique method was applied in selection of a sample of 150 teachers and 8 head teachers for use in the study. Data generated in this study was analyzed using descriptive statistics (frequency tables and percentages). Open ended and closed ended questionnaires were used to collect data. In order to determine the reliability of the instruments, a pilot study was conducted in one school in the neighbouring division. The findings of the pilot study were used to compute Spearman's Rank order correlation coefficient and it was found to be 0.786 for the head teachers' questionnaire and 0.812 for the teachers' questionnaire. Data collected was coded and analyzed using the Statistical Package of Social Sciences (SPSS). The study established that educational resources for the hearing impaired learners are varied but not enough, it also established that the government and the community involvement in the education of the hearing impaired learners is minimal. The study established suggestions on ways of minimizing the challenges of the hearing impaired learners in learning and made the following recommendations; Recruiting special needs trained teachers to ensure that the teacher- learner ratio falls to an acceptable level. The government and the community members should be actively involved in the learning of the hearing impaired learners through the provision of learning resources in their schools. It was hoped that the findings of this study would be of great help to the Ministry of Education, policy makers, head teachers and upcoming researchers who could be interested in further research in provision of quality inclusive education.