An Exploration of Attributes of Self-Efficacy among Learners with Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities in Selected Special Units in Kajiado County

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ABSTRACT

Self-efficacy is the ability to believe in one self in performing a given task. The main objective of this study was to explore the attributes of self-efficacy of learners with intellectual and developmental disabilities in selected special units in Kajiado County, Kenya. The study was informed by self-efficacy theory by Albert Bandura. A mixed method approach, Embedded design was used to collect and analyze the data. Simple random sampling was done to select the 10 special units in Kajiado county. Purposive sampling was done to select learners with IDD who have been in the special units for a period of 7 years and above and their parents/caregivers. The learners were 85 and their parents/caretakers 85. All the 26 teachers in the selected special units participated in the study. The target population was 343 while the sample size was 196 respondents. Tools for collecting data were questionnaires, focus group discussion guide and observation schedule. Teachers filled in questionnaires; parents/caretakers participated in the focus group discussion while the observation guide was used for the learners as they worked. Quantitative data was analyzed using descriptive statistics while qualitative data was analyzed through NVivo software version 12. The major findings of the attributes according to the teachers, parents/caregiver's include skills mastery, verbal persuasion, appreciation, energy flow and exposure. Teachers too felt that incorporating modern technology in teaching and learning can in a big way enhance self-efficacy of learners with IDD.

Key words: Self- efficacy – Intellectual and developmental disability Mental retardation

BACKGROUND

Education is a fundamental right for all people of all ages and status throughout the world (World Conference on Education for All 1990). It is the process of acquiring skills, knowledge, experience, and attitude, which paves way to success in future. Since learning is key in life, society does not leave education to chance. If every child's potential is nurtured in the right learning environment, he/she has opportunity to reach the highest goal and lead an independent life.

In Kenya the Ministry of education has established a number of special units attached to mainstream schools in almost every sub-county where they follow special needs curriculum. Most of the learners found in special units are those who cannot fit in mainstream schools due to the nature of their disabilities (Salamanca 1994). Common conditions found in special units are; autistic, mentally challenged, intellectually challenged, cerebral palsy, learning disability and Down syndrome. Often the terms mentally retarded/challenged and intellectually disabled/challenged are used interchangeably in most of the studies. Another condition that is closely related and at times used to refer to the same is learning disability.

Learners with intellectual challenges have learning disabilities. This study is concerned with learners with intellectual challenges and learning disabilities, and who may be also suffering from cerebral palsy. The study uses "intellectual and developmental disability" as the general umbrella term for all these conditions. The American Association of Mental Retardation (AAMR, 2002) defines intellectual and developmental disability (IDD) as a condition marked by significant limitations expressed in both adaptive behavior functioning and intellectual functioning. Throughout the study, IDD will be used as the short form of Intellectual and Developmental Disability.

Diagnostic Statistical Manual V ([DSM V], 2016), describes IDD as a deficit in cognitive capacity and adaptive functioning that results in the person not meeting developmental and social cultural standards. DSM V recommends Intelligent Quotient (IQ) in testing and assessing the severity of adaptive functioning. Adaptive functioning impairment falls under one of the three categories, conceptual, practicalor social. Deficit in cognitive ability include, abstract thinking, problem solving, planning, judgment, and academic learning, (DSM V 2016). Children with IDD are classified into three categories; the educable intellectually challenged also referred to as mild with IQ between 75-70 percent, trainable intellectually challenged also referred to as moderate with IQ between 50-70 percent, the severe have IQ between 50-25, while the profound have the IQ below 25 percent. This study has its concern on the mild and moderate IDD, that is, the educable and the trainable. The rationale is that these are the learners found in special units and often they spend many years in school than their counter parts with no disabilities. The study explored the transition rate and self-efficacy of learners who have been in special units for a period of seven years and above in selected special units in Kajiado county.

IDD impairment is characterized by limited intellectual functioning and adaptive behavior encompassing skills in both social and practical life (DSM V 2016). Intellectual functioning refers to general mental ability that includes reasoning, planning, problem solving and abstract thinking. Their intellectual functioning level is below average and are significantly limited in adaptive functioning, i.e., daily living skills. Statistics show that 2.5 to 3 percent of the general population are children with intellectual disability (AAMR, 2002). One is said to have this condition if the intellectual functioning level is below average in more than two adaptive skills. Adaptive skills refer to skills like basic communication skills, home living skills, self-care, social skills and self-direction (Sechoara & Koen, 2014). Children with mental retardation have a delayed developmental milestone in comparison with their "non-disabled" peers, however, their disabilities differ in degree of severity. Delay in attainment of motor milestone, perceptual dysfunction, and sensorimotor performance, in addition to limited intellectual functioning are barriers that learners with IDD face while learning complex tasks (Cano & Garcia, 2015). For one to be diagnosed of intellectual and developmental disability has to meet three criteria: intellectual impairment with IQ below 75, substantial difficulty in activities of daily living and an onset before 18 years of age, (American Psychiatric Association [APA], 2013).

There are approximately 2.7 million people with IDD in Kenya, less than 19 000 have no access to education, this is according to the statistics from Kenya Society for the Mentally Handicapped (2016). This population too, needs to enjoy its right to quality and equitable education. It calls for a need to evaluate the relevance of the special needs curriculum content on skills that would lead to self-reliance as opposed to acquiring intellectual knowledge that is a great challenge to them. Learners with IDD if exposed to conducive environment, trained personnel, structured special needs curriculum and effective teaching methods can progressively acquire adaptive and functional skills (Kaur 2005; Kinuthia 2018; Macharia, 2018). Structured special needs curriculum refers to a curriculum that is designed to meet the needs of a learner at an individual level, track the progress and the exit process (IDEA 2004). School reports from the county office from special schools/units in Kajiado show IDD learners who have been in the same class for a period of over 8 years, (MoE Kajiado, 2021) while their peers in the mainstream schools transit every academic year to the next level. Musima (2014) confirms the same findings by pointing out that learners with intellectual disabilities overstay in school, only to come out at an advanced age having not gained much for self-independence.

This study seeks to explore the self-efficacy of learners who have been in special unit for a period of eight years and above. Self-efficacy is a belief of one's own capabilities to plan and execute any course of action required to produce expected results (Bandura, 1997). It reflects one's self-confidence and ability to exercise control over behavior, motivation and social environment. The major attributes of self-efficacy include, individual's self- concept, self-esteem and self-confidence. Contrary to traditional constructs, self-efficacy beliefs vary depending on the domain of functioning as well as the circumstances surrounding the occurring behavior (Bandura, 1977, 1986, 1997). Peoples' behavior is often based on what they believe and feel about themselves, a person's self-efficacy determines the choice and the efforts one puts in at any given task (Bandura 1992, 1994). Where one believes he will succeed, more effort will be exhibited, and the contrary of it when one believes he will fail (Ormond, 2015). Motivation and performance determine how people who are proactive can be self-efficacious.

Enoma and Malone (2020) did a study in Australia on the self-efficacy and mathematics achievement of learners with borderline, mild and moderate intellectual challenges. The study sought to establish two relationships: 1) relationship between mathematics self-efficacy and learners with IDD, 2) the relationship between self-efficacy of students with IDD and their achievements in mathematics. A modified version of self-efficacy instrument was used to investigate the relationship between self-efficacy and mathematics achievements among the twenty-three IDD learners in a high school. The instrument developed by Joet, Bressoux and Usherr (2011) was modified to be relevant and appropriate for learners with IDD. Results showed the mean self-efficacy as 65 percent. The correlation between self-efficacy and mathematical achievement was very weak. The results also showed that self-efficacy is an individual or a personal attribute, however, the environment can influence it. In acquiring prevocational skills IDD learners are prepared for post school activities like further studies to enhance the skills already taught, self-employment, supported employment or sheltered workshops. Mastery of these skills enhances their self-confidence, hence builds self-efficacy

Self-efficacy is the feelings of adequacy, competence and efficiency in coping with life. It is shown by our behavioral standards (Bandura (1977). Any time an individual meets and maintains an expected performance standard, self-efficacy is enhanced, whereas failure to meet them lowers self-efficacy. He further argues that an individual's perception on the control over one's life inability to influence things, adversely affects personal life, breeds apathy, apprehension, and despair. People with low self-efficacy will feel helpless, unable to control life's events and believe any effort they can make is futile (Bandura 1995). People high in self-efficacy have great confidence in their abilities, in problem solving and analytical thinking. They believe they can accomplish whichever task they are set to do, so long as they have the means. Their strong believe that they have the recipe for success moves them, (Pajares & Miller 1994). Bandura (1997) perceives self-efficacy as a belief in one's ability to organize and execute course of action as expected to acquire set goals. In a school set up this persistence and personal sense of confidence are linked to goal setting and success.

In addition, self-efficacy is a variable that mediates between cognition and performance (Bandura 1997; Dewitz, Woolsey & Walsh 2009; Sullivan & Guerra 2007). This therefore suggests, even though skills and knowledge are important factors that contribute to success, equally important is sense of believe in oneself. Judgement for self-efficacy is based on four sources of information; vicarious experiences, performance attainment, verbal persuasion, and physiological and emotional arousal (Bandura 1997).

Mastery of experiences according to Bandura is a feeling of achievement and success even when faced with challenges linked with perseverance, resilience, and relatively reduced stress in front of a daunting task. Vicarious experience refers to a feeling of increased sense of ability because of observing others succeed or achieve a given task. The third factor of improving one's self-efficacy is through social persuasion. It refers to influence from others that may either increase or decrease one's sense of confidence and personal capability. Self-management is about control of physiological and emotional arousal (Bandura 1991).

Among the four factors that contribute to self-efficacy, this study was informed more by performance attainment and verbal persuasion. Verbal performance is a source of self-efficacy, which involves reminding people constantly that they possess the ability to achieve whatever they want, (Bandura, 1977). Teachers, therapists and parents to reinforce a desired behavior frequently use this strategy. Since learners with IDD fall more in practical learning skills than intellectual learning, teachers and parents can use this strategy to teach skills like bead making, pottery, tailoring and leather work. Acquiring these skills can be enhanced through persuasion. Among the four, the most powerful influential source is performance attainment. This done by applauding any previous successful experiences.

Self- efficacy is the personal judgment that helps to determine how one can execute an action or behavior in prospective situations (Bandura 1977). It is a person's conviction and beliefs in their ability to perform a given task. People who are self-efficacious develop themselves, their confidence increase as they master new domains. It also increases willingness and curiosity to experiment other new ideas, set for higher expectations for performance in future as well as increased persistence and unwavering focus on tasks that go beyond the previous performance (Ormrod 2008). A learner who is motivated will strive to perform better in a given task since performance and motivation make people to be proactive.

Learners with intellectual challenges perform better in practical skills than in academic activities. Skills that come along with nurturing and developing individual's abilities boosts learner's self-efficacy. Mastery of skills in line with the learner's abilities develops interest, creates curiosity to do better and enhances self-esteem. Developing personal skills builds the learners self-efficacy. Attainment of a higher-level self-efficacy through learning practical functional skills makes the learner gain self-confidence and nurtures self-belief. Eventually it facilitates easier transition from special schools to post school activities since the learner will be prepared for independent living or post school activities.

Prior success stories will demonstrate an individual's capabilities and strength, hence feelings of high self-efficacy. Small achievements for IDD learners while in and outside classroom should not pass unnoticed. Parent, teachers and significant others can be a source of encouragement and motivation for learners with IDD whenever they make an attempt to perform a task however simple it may appear. Positive feedback on a student's performance was reported to have high levels of perceived competence at a given task compared to those who got negative feedback (Chomba 2014; Maturana et al. 2019; Mutai 2018).

The study was guided by Self Efficacy theory. The theory argues that higher levels of self-efficacy promote self-accomplishment and feelings of wellbeing. Self-confidence builds one's self-efficacy, and enhances that sense achievement. Learners with IDD if given an opportunity to learn a given skill, and the skill is well learnt, self-confidence is built and this enhances self-efficacy. Self-efficacy theory encourages one to keep on setting goals after achieving the already set goals. This increases mastery of skills and builds the individual's motivation to become better. It increases persistence, and the desire to become better and better (Ormrod 2008).

Research Objective

The study purposed to explore attributes of self-efficacy among learners with intellectual and developmentally disabilities in selected special units in Kajiado County.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

Accordingly, our particular illustrative study belongs to the EMM research design strategy, where a complementary quantitative study is embedded within a primarily qualitative study (Creswell & Clark, 2010; R. B. Johnson & Onwuegbuzie, 2004; R. B. Johnson et al., 2007). In this approach, mixing of the Emergent approaches utilize mixed methods when issues develop during the process of conducting the researchrequiring adjustments to the research strategy, rather than being predetermined at the outset of the

study. In contrast, fixed designs are mixed methods studies where the use of quantitative and qualitative methods is predetermined and planned at the start of the research process, and the procedures are implemented as planned.

The study used a mixed method research approach adopting the embedded design. Creswell & Clark, (2010) explain an embedded design as a complementary quantitative study is embedded within a primarily qualitative study. This study utilized phenomenological design and descriptive design was embedded. Phenomenological design helped to give focus to the commonality of a lived experience within a particular group. In this case, attention was given to both parents, caretakers who accompany the children as well as the children themselves. Creswell, (2013) opine that the fundamental goal of phenomenological design is to arrive at a description of the nature of the particular phenomenon. Similarly descriptive design was used. Questionnaires were used to collect data from teachers

Study Area

This research was conducted in Kajiado County in Kenya. Kajiado County is 80 Kms south of Nairobi town. Kajiado lies at the boarder of Kenya/Tanzania on the South, on the North Nairobi County and on the East Kiambu County. Kajiado sits on longitude 360 5' and 370 5' East, between latitude 10 0' and 30 0' South. It is situated in the former Rift valley province of Kenya. Kajiado county covers an area of 21, 293 km², with a population of 1,117,840 according to 2019 census (County Track 2015). This study was conducted in Kajiado County because it has more prevalent cases of learners with different categories of disability than most of other counties in Kenya (MoE Kajiado, 2021). In addition, Nampaso (2016) points out that Kajiado is also one of the counties in Kenya where education for girls and boys is less valued due to strong cultural beliefs, and worse for learners with disabilities.

Sampling Procedures and Sample Size

Sampling is the process of selecting a statistically representative sample of individuals from the target population. The sample should be large enough to answer the research question (Majid, 2017). In a research study, sampling size between 10% – 30% is a recommended presentation of the target group as pointed out by Mugenda (2009). Sample size is the number of individual respondents selected from the target population of the study population.

Kajiado County has 20 special units with learners with IDD. The study was conducted in 10 special units which is 50% of the total number of the units in the County. To select the 10 special units the researcher got a list of all the special units from the Education office, listed them down alphabetically from the first to the last, i.e., Nos 1-20. Through simple random sampling, schools with even numbers were selected for the study. In total 10 special units were selected.

Kajiado county has 341 IDD learners in special units which is target population, the researcher sampled 85 learners and their parents, this 41% of the target population. The 85 IDD learners were purposively selected from the selected special units. These were all IDD learners who have been in the special units for a period of 7 years and above. Their parents/ caregivers too were purposively selected to participate in the study. The rationale of including the parents is to help solicit in-depth qualitative data that their children may not be in a position to give due to their intellectual impairment. The parents/caregivers who participated in the study were one from each learner. The third category of participants were the teachers. All the teachers in the selected special units were part of the respondents. They were 26 teachers. The teachers provided quantitative data needed to answer the research question, this is because they spend most of the time in school with the learners.

The research comprised of 85 learners with IDD, 85 parents/caregivers and their 26 teachers. Resulting to a sample size of 196. The sample size was arrived at by purposively selecting all the learners with IDD who have been seven years and above in the selected special units, their parents/guardians and their teachers.

From the parents/caregivers the researcher collected qualitative data, while from the teacher's quantitative data was collected. From the learners, observation schedule was used to collect qualitative data.

Data Collection Instruments

Githinji and Njau (2014) define research tools as instruments used to collect empirical data for research. The researcher used focus group discussions schedule and observation guide to collect data. Observation guide was used to observe learners as they carry out the tasks given using the skills taught and their performance. With the help of the supervisors, tools were developed for variables being tested in a language easily understood; focus group schedule and observation guide. Focus group discussion was done with the parents/care givers of learners with IDD, while the observation guide was used by the researcher to collect qualitative data from the learners.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSIONS

Self-efficacy refers to an individual's belief in one self to perform a given task and the confidence in the ability, (Bandura 1977). Research shows that learner's self-efficacy can be developed through many ways, among them are, learners' learning environment and the teacher's methodology. Therefore, to build self-efficacy among IDD learners, a disability friendly environment and teachers' pedagogical skills are key factors. An environment that answers to the needs of each leaner at individual level, and use of diverse teaching methods in line with the ability of the learner will reap abundantly to learners with intellectual challenges. Several studies have found that learners with intellectual challenges score low in achievement, motivation and self-efficacy, (Bergin 201; Seyed et al, 2017). Respondents of this study through the focus group discussion shared their views in relation to attributes of self-efficacy to learners with IDD.

Verbal Persuasion

It refers to use positive feedback on somebody's achievement. Telling a young child, "Well done", or "you are good", has a positive impact, and makes the child want to do better in the future, it is a form of verbal persuasion. It is motivating and encouraging, it increases belief in one self. Employing verbal persuasion in teaching can boost learners' self -belief in a big way. Use of motivational words is seen as another means to build self-efficacy among learners with intellectual challenges. Verbal persuasion can boost self-confidence to higher levels. Both teachers and caregivers can use credible communication and giving positive feedback on efforts made by the learners. Appreciation or recognition of a kind gesture or an action performed would mean so much to the receiver. It motivates the receiver to do better. Parents shared their experience when their children felt recognized.

My daughter on Saturdays she mops the floor, cleans utensils, and does other simple house chores, if I say'well done my child', she feels very good about it, she will repeat the same every other Saturday and, on my part, I have to compliment her, if I am away, she waits till in the evening when I'm back, and she will not forget. [Respondent from FGD 7, 18th Oct 2022]

Another had a similar experience, My daughter will keep on showing me an item she made in school, keep talking about it till I complement her, if I fail to, she sulks. I have learnt to motivate her in order to do better, I have to appreciate whatever she does. [Respondent from FGD 1, 5th Oct 2022]

When my son makes something new in school, he is eager to come and show to the other siblings at home, he feels he is better than them. [Respondent from FGD 6, 14th Oct 2022]

Learning new skills builds self-confidence, more so when the task is recognized and appreciated. All the respondents agreed through verbal persuasion both caregivers and the teachers can greatly build IDD learners self-efficacy. In day-to-day life verbal persuasion may be more applicable to children or teenagers than adults, in contrary, people with intellectual challenges even adults crave for recognized and

appreciation, they seem to possess an innate desire for it. On the other hand, while compliments and appreciation build self-efficacy, failure to do so, erodes it. This happens when parents' expectations exceed the child's ability to perform. They see themselves as failures, they are demotivated and discouraged. One of the respondents shared her experience,

I do encourage my daughter, but I've higher expectations from her and I feel disappointed when she doesn't achieve. I am happy, though I feel after being in school for so many years she should be able to do better, her younger siblings can do so many things in the house, yet she is the first born, the 2nd from her is completing college this year. [Respondent from FGD 7, 18th Oct 2022].

Such responses from a parent or a teacher can be very discouraging, they kill the morale to try next time. It can destroy individual's self-efficacy. Learners with IDD are very sensitive to the language used towards them. Most of them are already stigmatized, anything disheartening can crush them. A highly sustained behavioral involvement is shown by learners who are accompanied with positive emotional tone, noted Mokobane (2015). Timely and continuous encouragement and appreciation will boost the learners self-worth, develop self-confidence, this eventually leads to enhanced self-efficacy. A self- efficacious learner has increased enthusiasm, curiosity, interest and open to learn more. A study done by in Kenya by Toroitich (2019) revealed a significant linear relationship ($p>.05$) between learners' achievement and teachers' motivation. The study concluded that motivated teacher with a healthy self-efficacy can highly influence learners' self-esteem and promote performance of learners with intellectual challenges.

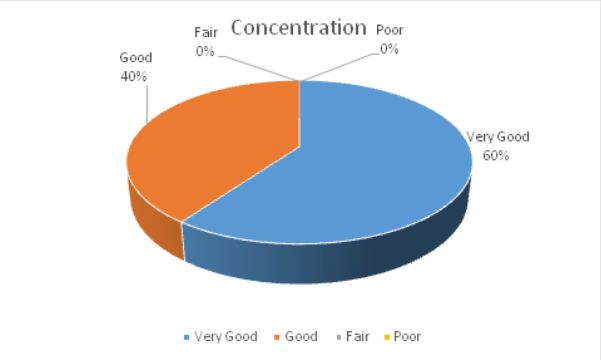
Following Toroitich's findings self-efficacy is not only influenced by school factors but also how motivated the teacher is. When schools fail to provide the right infrastructures for effective learning, it is demoralizing to the teachers. No wonder, in most of the special units in Kajiado county one finds learners idling or repeating the same activities throughout the years, as noted by most of the respondents. Thus, another attribute to build the IDD learners self-efficacy is enhancing the teacher's self-efficacy.

Maximizing Energy Flow

Figure 1 portrays learners' ability to concentrate while engaged in a task they like. Generally, there was a high level of concentration as the learners engaged in the task. Interaction involved the teachers and the learners, and once the learner was sure of what to do, he/she concentrated with the task at hand. Few students scored fair, from time to time they distracted the others, however after few minutes they would get back to work to achieve the set goal. Most of those who high in ability and had good/very good in end product had a high level of concentration. They experienced flow which according to Cziksentmihalyi (2008), is a mental state whereby a person performing a given task gets fully immersed in it. Its main key elements are complete absorption of time and energy in an activity. Instructors and parents can capitalize on this innate energy and equip learners with skills they enjoy doing.

Figure 1

Learners' Concertation as they Worked



In positive psychology flow is a mental state whereby a person performing a given task gets fully immersed in it, it is characterized by complete absorption of time and energy in an activity. Cziksentmihalyi (2008), defines flow as a state in which an individual gets so involved in an activity or exercise that nothing else matters, an experience that is so enjoyable that one will continue to do it regardless of time or energy consumed. In the process there is enjoyment, and melting of action and consciousness. It gives a balance between a skill and a challenging task. Respondents shared that learners with IDD when they are doing a task they like, they easily get absorbed in it, and often one cannot stop till they reach the end. The respondents were in agreement in the concept of flow, they shared their experiences how children with intellectual challenges can get fully consumed or absorbed in what the love doing. One of them had this to share,

They feel good about themselves after performing a task, and they easily get consumed in doing an activity they like, they will concentrate for hours without getting tired. [Respondent from FGD 5, 13th Oct 2022]

While another said

"When they learn how to do something they get absorbed in it, they throw themselves into the task completely, and don't realize time flowing, *unawalazimisha tu waache".* (Meaning, you have to force them to stop). [Respondents from FGD 6, 14th Oct 2022]

This clearly shows there is energy flow when they do an activity they love, they easily get consumed in it. This enhances their self-efficacy. It follows then that parents and teachers can capitalize on this rare strength that IDD learners have, by exposing them to variety of activities. Practical activities build them skill wise and offers a platform to enhance their self-efficacy. Self-efficacious learners will work to achieve their goals in order to be successful, in the long run become more skillful and can eventually transition to post school activities. Learners with a high sense of self efficacy are more likely to try any task so long as they are well instructed and intrinsically motivated (Bandura 1977). Self-efficacy among learners with IDD is a factor and predictor of successful achievement (Bergen 2013), it is for this reason that the teachers and parents need play their cojoined role to build the learners self-belief.

Exposure

Exposing IDD learners to other people who are similar yet making it in daily life increase their self-confidence. Observing peers succeeding in tasks can greatly strengthen their self -belief and boost their self-efficacy. According to the parents, if the learners from time to time visit private special units or artisan workshops where there are intellectually challenged people who earn for their living, such interaction can raise their self-confidence. As far as exposure is concerned the parents echoed their views:

To interact with people with disabilities and see what they do can be helpful. If they can see other people with intellectual challenged who lead an independent life it can be motivating, it will help them to believe in themselves the more. [Respondent from FGD 8, 19th Oct 2022]

Mentoring them through other intellectually challenged people who are making it out there or inviting resource persons in schools who have similar challenges to mentor them can make them build their self-confidence. [Respondent from FGD 7,18th Oct 2022]

According to Bandura (1997), judgement for self-efficacy is based on four sources of information; vicarious experiences, performance attainment, verbal persuasion, and physiological and emotional arousal. Vicarious experience refers to a feeling of increased sense of ability because of observing others succeed or achieve a given task. Exposing learners to other people doing similar activities develops their self-efficacy.

Skills Mastery

From the observation guide the study found the learners have the ability to perform a variety of skills so

long as they exposed to the right environment and resources are provided. Figure 6 shows all learners at the prevocational level in the selected special units can learn a practical skill. Though not at the same pace, each of them made strides towards achieving the desired goal. Patience is required in teaching for the fact they have different capabilities. One way to promote individual development and self fulfilment of IDD learners is to fully develop individual's potential talents within one's abilities and interests (Mwangi, 2023). Enoma and Malone (2020) further argue that given the right environment through diverse teaching methodologies, encouragement and social support can build learners self-efficacy

Figure 2

Learners' Ability

One of the national goals of education is to promote individual development and self-fulfillment (Mwangi 2023). A way to promote individual development and self fulfilment is by providing opportunities to fully develop individual's potential talents within their abilities and interests. To realize this national goal of education among learners with IDD, the priority of special needs curriculum is to offer post school activities in line with learners' abilities and interests. Skills that come along with developing individual's abilities boost learner's self-efficacy. Mastery of skills in line with the learner's abilities will develop interest, create curiosity to do better and builds self-esteem. This calls for a variety of teaching and learning resources and prepared personnel in practical skills. The IDD learners have the ability to do practical activities, some of them learn so fast. According to the parents, when they are given the opportunity and are well instructed, they make wonderful items such as table mats, flower vases, handbags, serviette boxes amongst others. One respondent shared her experiences, Learning new skill builds their self-confidence especially when they accomplish a task given. It makes them to belief in themselves, they feel they too have the ability to perform a task successfully.

A caregiver rejoined, My daughter will try copy what she sees me do while knitting, the challenge comes in making pattern since you must count. She is very eager to learn something new, with little assistance she can do so well in crocheting. [Respondents from FGD 7, 18th Oct 2022]

Another expressed her pains, My son is known as a great artist in the school, he makes very good drawings

and can draw people as they are, he is also very gifted in recalling what he learns in school. This makes him special among his older siblings even here in school, at times I ask myself why the school cannot help him develop this gift. [Respondents from FGD 9, 24th Oct 2022]

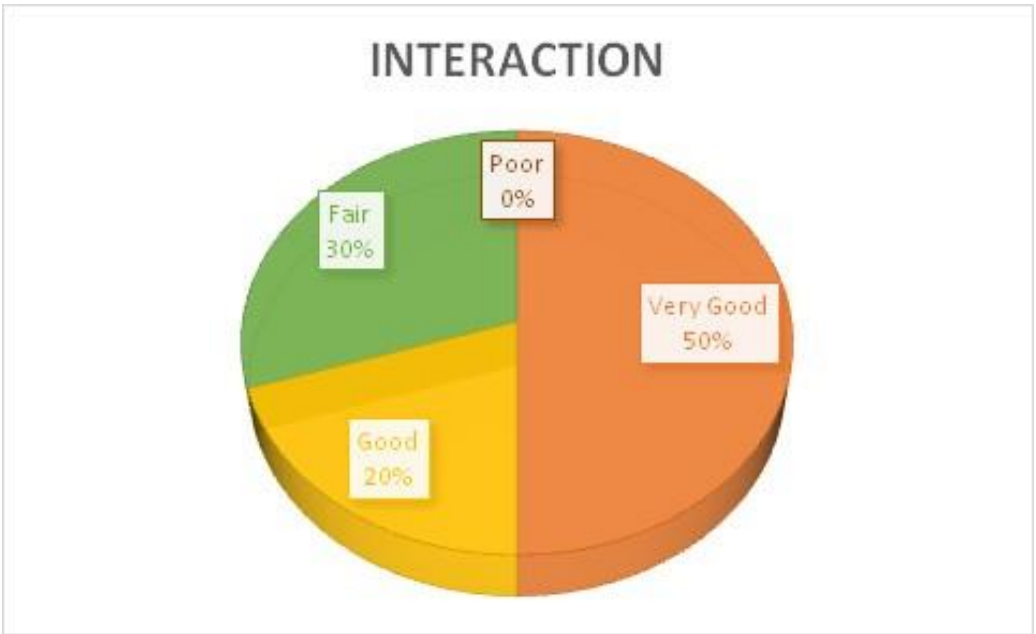
Hove (2014) notes that IDD learners in South Africa transition from special school/units after acquiring a mastery of the required skills according to individual abilities, unlike in most special schools/units in Kenya. Skills taught prepare learners for future sustenance; mastery of the practical skills builds the learner's self-efficacy. To achieve skills mastery the teacher targets on activities within the learner's ability, not too challenging nor too light. A too light task will cause boredom, whereas too difficult may result to low self-efficacy. Teaching specific skills to the individual learner, gradually nurturing the skill and exposing them to vicarious experiences helps the learner grow in the skill and master it. Credible, consistent and continuous encouragement motivates the leaner to do better and better (Bandura 1991).

Use of Appreciation

Figure 3 shows there was a high level of interaction between the leaners and the instructors. Very few who interacted fairly. From the observation guide the study found that warm teacher-learner interaction motivated the learner to commit more time in the tasks. Whenever the teachers appreciated them or affirmed them their faces beamed with determination. It was noted that most of them did not appreciate being told to undo whenever they made a mistake. A lot of patience and reassurance from the teachers was needed. Those who fast in learning the skill were quick and would do quite well. Some would take the initiative to leach their peers though their efforts were not warmly welcomed. In conclusion, practical skill can be learnt by learners with intellectual challenges. Individualized teaching would bring forth abundant fruits. Curriculum of learners with IDD need adaptation to suit each learner's needs (Chesaro, 2020). Important aspects in recognizing and meeting the individual needs of an IDD learner in order to maximize the education benefits are; the teacher's knowledge and skills, proper use of behavioral interventions and appropriate use of designed curriculum (Alkahtani 2016). Among the three functional determinants of a behavior according to Ajzen (1991) is the subjective norm. This is the belief significant others have towards how one performs a given task. Parents/caretakers and teachers' affirmation and appreciation contribute greatly to the performance outcome

Figure 3

Learners' interaction as they worked



Appreciation is a positive feedback or affirmation after achieving a given task. It gives a warm feeling to perform even better. Receiving positive feedback from others can improve sense of self efficacy. Appreciating learner's performance is a technique that can be used to motivate the learners and increase his/her self-confidence. Appreciation not only motivates but also creates confidence, gives a feeling that one is capable of an achievement. Positive feedback can be powerful in strengthening the already existing sense of self efficacy while negative feedback can demoralize and demotivate learners' performance. Teachers and parent can make a deliberate choice to encourage learners in every effort they make, however small it may be. A habit of appreciation builds and strengthens learners' performance. They too appreciate compliments and it motivates them to do better. In the open focus discussion, the parents shared their experience with their children after learning the new skill. Parents acknowledged that learning new skills build learners self-efficacy especially when they are able to complete a task given. One of the respondents said,

She longs to come home to show us what they have done, when I and the siblings compliment her, she is very happy, and she wants to try to do better, she feels she can perform better than her siblings at least in something. They are proud of their achievements, learning new skills help to build their belief in themselves. [Respondent from FGD 8, 19th Oct 2022]

In one school a parent gave this moving confession that took better part of the group discussion;

When Davies (pseudo name) learnt to shave others in class, a skill he was taught by his teacher, he was very happy, he got the name "*the school barber"*, he feels great with that tittle. He believes nobody can do better than him. He is so happy to be in school. He is 18 years old…. As a parent I'd like to give him another course but… [Respondent from FGD 3, 1st Nov 2022]

Learning the new skills increased Davies' self-efficacy. The mother says he feels great about that achievement. This shows motivation and compliments from significant others like parents, siblings and teachers sustains the behavior of wanting to do better again and again. Bearing in mind their mental condition, teachers need to break down their tasks into small achievable goals and gradually assist them in every step. Appreciation and encouragement from others build self-esteem, this is because an individual's emotional and psychological wellbeing influences how one feels about self (Bandura, 1977). Receiving positive feedback motivates the recipient and hence builds self-efficacy.

The observation schedule used by the researcher to collect the qualitative data showed the learners had the ability to grasp simple skills taught, and they enjoyed performing the task through the guidance of the teacher. During the process the learners were interactive and relied mostly with the teachers and less on the peers. All learners expected a complement after completing the task successfully, either verbal or in kind.

CONCLUSION

Special schools and units offer opportunities to build and develop self-efficacy, often teachers and parents are oblivious of these open avenues, and so they don't make use of them. The findings of this study reveal that equipping the teachers with variety of pedagogical skills can in a big way help learners with IDD build their self-belief which enhances self-efficacy. Attributes to self-efficacy that instructors and parents can use include, use of verbal persuasion, capitalizing on energy flow, use of role models, appreciation technique and gain of skills masterly. If these techniques are applied both at home and school, a learner friendly environment will be created where the leaner will at home, this can develop self-confidence and build learner's self -efficacy.

Another revelation from this study is that, apart from the already existing opportunities to build self-efficacy among learners with IDD, there are other strategies that both teachers and caretakers can employ. Other strategies identified to build self-efficacy as suggested by the respondents are, active parental role in the

learning process, used of individualized transition plan as a compulsory document for all SNE teachers with learners who are intellectually challenged. Use of modern technology as assisting teaching device. Added to the list is the use of motivation technique in and outside class also which scored high. In addition, instructors are encouraged to use more learner- centered strategy through differentiation methodology to nurture and develop self-efficacy of learners with intellectual and developmental disabilities in special units. Employing of these action plan can help teachers to realize the goals of special units which is to transition self-efficacious learners who are prepared with prevocational skills for post school activities.

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